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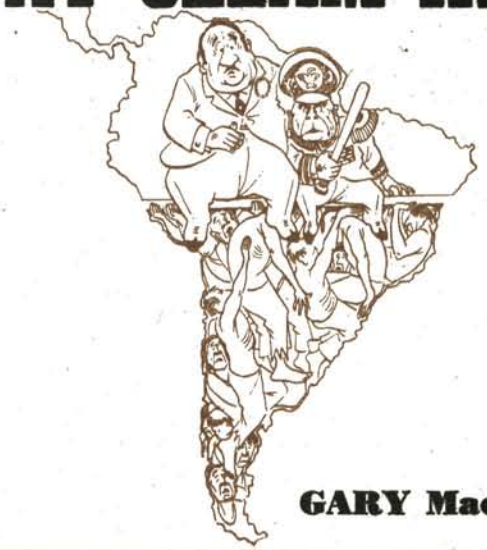

GARY MacEOIN

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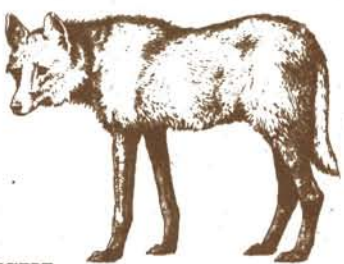

ELLEN STRENSKI
FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT IN THE WILD KINGDOM

ABIGAIL McCARTHY
LAITY AND CHURCH: II

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NEWS & VIEWS

Electing a Pope

It was like climbing into a time machine and being propelled back 14 or 15 years to Rome and Vatican II: an urgent press conference featuring many of the old faces (Gary MacEoin at the conference table; John O'Connor among the press-people; *et al.*), and, of course, the familiar old worries, beginning with the worry about the Vatican old guard being too much in control of things.

The only thing really different was the setting. Instead of some unpretentious hall along the Via Conciliazione, this meeting was at the posh Princeton Club on West 43rd Street in New York City; danish and coffee on the sponsors.

The gathering was arranged by the Committee for the Responsible Election of the Pope, an ad hoc group of 25 Catholics who eschew the designation ad hoc. "We plan to be around a while," said James F. Andrews, primary spokesperson for the Committee.

The Committee's in business to bring about a "consciousness-raising" regarding the next papal election and maybe an opening up of the election process itself. It plans to gather information and make it available not only to the cardinals who will be doing the electing, but to interested individuals who, the Committee hopes, will be doing some influencing of their own.

The influencing, it can be presumed from MacEoin's new book, *The Inner Elite*, will be in the direction of progressive candidates who line up on the right side of old issues, like birth control, and of new issues, such as women priests and a married clergy. The right side is on the left.

The Inner Elite had its coming-out at the meeting. Basically it's a series of dossiers on those who will be participating in the next conclave, with special attention paid to papabili, the electables.

When a reporter asked how useful to anyone would be dossiers that ran from only a few paragraphs to a few pages, Andrews explained that the book represented but the beginning of what he expects will be a large flow of information, including computer read-outs on papabili in a context of various scenarios.

What, for instance, if the conclave took place in the time-setting of a Moro-type kidnapping? Or during a groundswell of anti-Curialist sentiment? Or during a third-world crisis? What would be the effects, for better and for worse, on a conclave? How would the conclave develop?

The Committee thus has contracted with the National Opinion Research Center to tell it what the computer divines. James Coleman and Andrew Greeley of NORC will coordinate the computer research; they're not members of the Committee for the Responsible Election of the Pope. They'll come up with the hard sociological data, and this will be gotten into the hands of the cardinals. Andrews so promises.

Also distributed to journalists at the Princeton Club was a newsletter, *Conclave Confidential*, a "service" of the Committee available for $30 a year. It's a monthly, four-page publication intended to provide "concerned Catholics with topical and behind-the-scene news from the Vatican."

Volume 1, Number 1 was signed "Paolo Sarpi," a pseudonym for three persons on this side of the Atlantic and three on the other.

The incongruity of a pseudonym leaped out at the newspeople. "Isn't it contradictory in terms of what you're doing and the openness you're asking of the Vatican?" pushed one journalist. "You've got a point," said Andrews. "We'll reconsider."

Andrews is chairman of the board of Sheed Andrews and McMeel, publisher of MacEoin's book and the newsletter. His word will count, as SA&MCM is underwriting the Committee.

While they're at it, said Philip Scharper, momentary co-chairman with Andrews of the Committee, he hoped there'd also be a reconsideration of the newsletter's tone. He noted that *Time* had characterized the newsletter as "cheeky." In Scharper's understanding, "cheeky" meant "backstairs chit-chat." He said he hoped this would be replaced by "reasoned, seasoned observation."

(Scharper resigned from the Committee two days later because of the association of his name in press coverage of the Committee with the Maryknoll Society. Scharper is editor of Orbis Books, book-publishing arm of the Maryknoll Fathers. He said he feared the name association might hurt the work of the Society.)

Scharper likewise expressed the hope that the Committee for the Responsible Election of the Pope will evolve ecumenically, "in composition and therefore outlook."

"We want to take in the expectations of our brothers and sisters, which are different and valuable," he said.

As to Committee expectations, the moods of the spokespersons varied markedly.

MacEoin said the composition of the present College of Cardinals is so locked into the one "mind-set," that he had "no interest in who will be the next Pope." In other words, it didn't matter who was elected. The cardinals were all of a kind.

Andrews took exception to MacEoin's pessimism. "We have no candidate for tomorrow," he said, "but two years from now we possibly could have."

"We're looking for a candidate who is upbeat, optimistic, whose outlook to the world reflects the Christian message." He appeared of the impression they'd find one.

Scharper didn't hop into the exchange, but it seemed obvious that he felt, because of the work of the Committee, the conclave could be effectively challenged to scrutinize candidates more carefully than would otherwise be the case.

And maybe it can be. Similar bands of lay people, forming similar groups and calling similar press conferences had their effect at Vatican II.

The difference is that then they were meeting down the street from where the bishops were sitting, and this made for all the difference in the world. The bishops could be confronted immediately and directly, sometimes as a body.

Today the Committee for the Responsible Election of the Pope is dealing largely from across the ocean from the Vatican, and with a group spread all over the world. Distance can be a great diffuser of impact. Come to think of it, there wasn't even a cardinal-observer at the Princeton Club.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

A Hard Truth

Fremont, Calif.

To the Editors: I noted in your issue of May 26 in the Television column that Philip Terzian called "one Catholic magazine's comparison of abortion in the U.S. with the Holocaust an "insane comparison." Why "insane" I would like to know? Since the late sixties when "legalized" abortion became widely-used, approximately 8 million unborn human lives have been extinguished in this country. Of course these American atrocities are not precisely similar to the Nazi atrocities—the unborn not being precisely the same as those who have attained maturity outside the womb, but I fail to see why the two are not comparable.

Please don't mistake me; I am not one of those who advocate violent action against abortion—but I cannot help being reminded of a line in the Moody Blues song, "A Question of Balance." The line runs, ". . . because the truth is hard to swallow—that's what the wall of blood is for. . . ."

CHARLES MARTIN

Chopin sub-rosa

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: Roy Chernus's review of Bernard Gavoty's book *Chopin* [Apr. 28], is so dumb it is hard to know where to begin or to stop criticizing it. Almost every sentence sounds like it was written by someone who flunked Psych. 101.

To begin with, Chernus fails to review the book. He reviews instead the book he thinks Gavoty should have written, one revealing Chopin's homosexuality and the effect it had on his music. He admits that "Every biography of Chopin I have read, including M. Gavoty's has evaded or denied his crucial homosexuality and dandy-aesthete sensibility."

But what are the facts that every biographer has "evaded"? Astound-

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THE MESSAGE FROM CALIFORNIA

The reaction to the passage two months ago by a two-to-one margin of California's Proposition 13—limiting property taxes to one percent of the property's 1975-76 assessed value, holding assessment increases to two percent a year, and restricting the legislature's ability to increase other taxes—should give the nation several things to worry about.

First we must acknowledge that some Californians voted for Proposition 13 with a valid complaint. The state has an unusually high proportion of homeowners and taxes on houses have risen spectacularly in the last few years. For example, a three-bedroom house assessed at $44,000 in 1972 was assessed at $91,000 in 1977. Middle-income families have been paying property taxes of between $2000 and $3000 a year. Also, scare tactics by the Proposition's opponents may have backfired and driven angry voters into the Proposition's camp. Finally, in some strange way, the vote may have been a symbolic rejection of the country's leadership.

Nevertheless, the consequences of the vote for the national welfare are bad. What has been interpreted as a "taxpayers' revolt," "sending a message" to every politician in the country, seems also to be, on another level, a product of one of the populace's lower emotions—the politics of resentment. Resentment by the dominant, relatively-well-off majority who feel bewildered and shortchanged by state and federal programs that have modestly redistributed resources and services to the disadvantaged over the past 15 years. Resentment susceptible, at different times, to manipula-

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tion by demagogues of every stripe: Richard Nixon's "law and order," George Wallace's "send them a message," Howard Jarvis's vulgar appeals to public distrust of bureaucrats, and even Governor Jerry Brown's fuzzy, small-is-beautiful, lower-your-expectations attacks on big government that inadvertently helped set the atmosphere for the Proposition he first opposed then appeared to accept.

Meanwhile, what was sold to the voters as tax relief for the little-man homeowner was actually a boon to big-business property owners, many of whom live outside the state, a cloak for the racism of those who thought they were voting against welfare loafers, and a blow to the weakest members of the community—old people, the disabled, those who need free health-care clinics, drug-abuse programs, free museums and libraries.

But, worst of all, the broad-based support for Proposition 13 raises the fundamental social-moral question about the function of taxation in a democratic society. The American system since the Progressive Era and the New Deal has used taxation to help fulfill the promises of the American dream of equal opportunity for all citizens. This means, in a happy coincidence of Christian principles and democratic theory, that everyone, through the government, assumes some responsibility for the welfare of everyone else. The tax revolt, in its gut-level expression, is a throwback to the most primitive nineteenth century individualism.

The only proper response to this attitude, which Senator George McGovern has correctly called "a degrading hedonism," is a strong moral, not pious, political leadership that confronts the real injustices in both the tax system and the economy. As Michael Harrington has suggested (*The New York Times,* June 15, 1978), one solution would be to abolish *all* taxes except a radically reformed federal income tax with the federal government redistributing funds according to need. But this kind of tax reform can emerge only from shared vision of what the good life is and who is meant to live it. The most frightening "message" from California is that, through the opportunism of business and political leaders, the deepest principles of democratic equality may be sacrificed while, just when we are struggling for some understanding of poverty both at home and in the Third World, the attention of America is focused on the swimming pool in some middle-class Californian's backyard.

WASHINGTON REPORT

DISSIDENTS AND DISSENT

Andrew Young claims the recent trials of the two Soviet dissidents are in some fashion a mark of progress toward humanity on the part of the Soviet society and its government. He may be right. Certainly 40 years ago, no Soviet prosecutor of "enemies of the state" would be asking and getting prison terms of eight or fifteen years for his pre-convicted defendants. Moreover, in those days, the defendants would not have been dissidents at all. There weren't any because they were shot in the neck while descending prison stairs or whisked off to Siberia forever when merely suspected of thought or speech in dissent from Stalin's. In those days the subjects of prosecutorial wrath in the Soviet Union were government officials, Old Bolsheviks and dialecticians who had failed to follow the latest, unannounced swerve in the thought of Josef Stalin or who simply had to be done in to demonstrate that the reason life in the USSR was so rotten was that the place was infested with saboteurs, spies, running dogs and lackeys of imperialism. In a society in which Khrushchev's getting out of his job alive with a great leap forward, surely some hope can be taken from mere prison terms for probably imaginary offenses that are, on the books, capital crimes.

Young's observation that there are what he would call political prisoners in the United States and that he himself had been tried for having organized a civil rights protest brought predictable demands for his resignation and/or impeachment. The move for impeachment was instantly and overwhelmingly rejected in the House of Representatives. That move may be considered the translation of Safireism in journalism into active politics, a disturbing switch despite its rejection. In print, Safire can be amusing as he equates minor peccadillos by isolated individuals in the Carter administration or the Democratic Congress—the two are by no means the same—with the organized, all-out assault on the Constitution undertaken by Safire's masters, the big crook, Nixon, and the little crook, Agnew. Anything is and ought to be permitted in political journalism. Safire gets us back in touch with the origins of political journalism in this country, when journalists were frankly the property of a party or a candidate and there was no nonsense about the facts. He is at once a gratifying touch of nostalgia for those good old days and a welcome bit of comic relief from the dull sobriety of the *New York Times*. Taken out of that context, however, and moved into political, even legislative action, Safireism is a little alarming. In the Young case, it was not only alarming but, perhaps inevitably, a verification of Young's remarks: clearly, the intent of the impeachment fiasco was to punish

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Young for holding and voicing opinions about the United States different from those of the authors of the impeachment move: he was an enemy of the state for what he had said: on that point, the differences between the USA and the USSR were a matter of degree.

And that, finally, is the humiliating truth that Young was trying, vainly, to call to our attention. If properly understood, his call to order, just to simple remembrance, could be immensely salutary for this country. Obviously, one cannot really equate the condition of political freedom in America with that condition in the Soviet Union. In the latter, there is none. In the United States there is quite a good deal. In both countries there is a normal, natural and constant effort on the part of the state to infringe upon any political freedom that exists or that may be thought to be coming into existence. For all the Carter campaign against government infringements upon citizens' rights, it is his Attorney-General, the Nation's chief law enforcement officer, who has openly defied a court order to produce evidence and has done so openly in the name of protecting a secret, political police operation. That same Attorney-General went out of his way to protect the chief of another secret political police operation, the CIA. If a pattern seems to emerge here, it is not the pattern of the Carter administration as such, but simply the pattern of the state, of Leviathan.

Similarly, it is hardly a rhetorical excess to point out that the judge in the case of Frank Snepp's book about the CIA in the last days of American South Vietnam revealed that he had completely prejudged the case, announced his verdict before the trial and clearly saw his own function as not one of discovering the facts and interpreting the law but as punishing swiftly and certainly an offense against the majesty of Leviathan.

The state as state inevitably regards itself as some sort of supreme being. This could be viewed as one of the ill effects of the spread of atheism and agnosticism in our time—"Since there is no God, I shall be God," says the state along with everyone else—except that the godly states of past and present, including the papacy and Puritan England and New England, have shown no less, sometimes more, inclination to deify the state. The formulations have differed, the results have been depressingly similar.

In that history, past and continuing, the American Republic has been a wild, radical experiment in anti-statism, far more radical than anything ever imagined by anyone anywhere near authority in the Soviet Union or even in the relatively enlightened Communist countries. The theory here has been to constrain the state in its automatic attacks on the citizens, to support the citizens in their defense against the state. The very idea is unthinkable in the USSR and in most of the world.

At the moment, in what seems to be an exceedingly curious counterreaction to the reaction against unbridled statism in Vietnam and Watergate, we are having a revival, a refurbishing of what is seen as respectable statism and a consequent "moderate" or "reasonable" curtailing of the rights of individual citizens in favor of the "needs" of the omnipotent state. These are dangerous times and Andrew Young is one of the very few in office who sees that.

FRANK GETLEIN

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IN BELFAST

NO MORE SONGS

For a while, things had been getting better. Then, in mid-June—in response, some said, to a political leader's statement that the Provisional Irish Republican Army was on its knees—the killings picked up. They averaged a death a day for ten days. Some examples: the IRA murdered—they say "executed" because he was a policeman—William Turbitt, although the extremist Protestant paramilitary group, the Ulster Freedom Fighters, had released their hostage, the popular priest, Rev. Hugh Murphy; IRA gunmen ambushed and killed Alan Ferguson, 22, of the Ulster Defense Regiment, and his Protestant bishop preached his eulogy—"The country must know that this young man was a truer Irishman than any of those who so treacherously led the ambush and took away his life"; the IRA shot Patrick McEntee, 58, the father of six children, in the head because, they said (wrongly, it seems) he was an "informer," and put booby traps around his body, and the new Catholic Primate of all-Ireland, the blunt scholar Tomas O'Fiaich, a nationalist with no love for the British presence, eulogized him—the killing was an act of "fratricidal slaughter" by a group of local tyrants who claimed "to set themselves up as judges and executioners of their fellow men"; meanwhile security forces gunned down three young terrorists planting bombs—with a reported 200 rounds fired to do them in—an index of the passion with which they were punished.

And late Tuesday night someone phoned a bomb threat—a bomb in a parked car, it said—to our hotel,

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the Stormont, a comfortable spot across the street from the magnificent top-of-the-hill palace from which Northern Ireland had governed itself until the British, convinced that the religious rioting between the Protestant majority and Catholic minority begun in 1968 was so far out of hand that Northern Ireland could no longer govern itself, seized direct control in 1972.

The policemen of the Royal Ulster Constabulary cleared us out of our rooms and the bar right before midnight and ordered everyone to remove his car from the lot. This left one mysterious car standing alone. Meanwhile the Ulster Defence Regiment and the British Army arrived in armored trucks and full combat regalia and ringed the property, lest this were a plot to suck in police targets for a sniper and bombing attack. The troops moved in on the lonely car with rifles and fired away, hoping to detonate the bomb if it was there. Then, to be absolutely sure, they planted their own charges and blew it up—flipping it upside down over 30 yards away—for in Belfast any unattended auto might harbor a hidden bomb.

This time there was no bomb. A young wife, unknown to her husband, had parked the family car there while she went out with someone else. While the poor husband sorted through the wreck, a group of Americans with cameras fluttered around, struck poses and asked the constable on guard if he would pose with them by the ruin—as if he were a Royal redcoat at Buckingham Palace gate. He said he'd rather not, so they asked him to take the picture. A few minutes before, I had talked with the unfortunate owner of the car. He was not bitter over the fact that in Northern Ireland a car could not be insured against this type of accident. He said only that the hoax bomb report had come from a "sick mind."

Most likely the call came because we were there—for the Information Seminar sponsored by the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and the Irish Council of Churches for about 35 American church leaders and journalists. One of our sessions had made the evening news, so a local terrorist wanted to give us visitors a mild taste of what they could do. Now, after a week in Belfast talking with church and state leaders, journalists, social workers, British soldiers, policemen, members of the paramilitary, peace people and ordinary citizens, plus another week reading and listening in Scotland and England, I come home with a state of mind as ambivalent and paradoxical as Northern Ireland itself. I have a rational conviction that the basic problem—a minor one compared to the Mideast, Cambodia or South Africa—can and must be resolved by an internationally-guaranteed political-economic formula. I also have an emotional fear that somewhere deep in the depressed Irish spirit there is a demon that doesn't want a rational solution, the demon of addiction to a romantic myth of a "united" all-Gaelic nation and culture, fed by bloodshed, self-immolation and hate—as if this "fratricidal slaughter" is destined to go on indefinitely, like a boozy, point-scoring political argument in a pub that will never close. We had laughed during the week when someone quoted Gladstone, "Every time we get an answer to the Irish question the Irish change the question." But I had shuddered—because she was close to the truth—when a young woman suggested that Ireland needed a frontal lobotomy to free it from its past.

One of the problems, of course, was getting the truth. People told conflicting stories and warned us against believing what we heard from everyone else. The British government officials, Unionist (Protestant) politicians, and RUC spokesmen blandly discounted the recent Amnesty International report and other charges of interrogation torture and maltreatment in prison, while the Association for Legal Justice produced scores of formal statements, made to solicitors and supported by doctors, by young men and women who had been brutalized within the last year. One typical experience: Sean Mackin, 19, swears that during three days of questioning at Castlereagh jail, police, to make him confess to a kidnapping and shooting, punched him continually in the face and stomach, pulled his hair, spread-eagled him against the wall leaning on his fingertips, pulled his testicles, kicked him, beat the soles of his feet with a leather strap, screamed at him and threatened to kill him. Unable to take it any more, Mackin would not confess but tried to cut his own wrists with a plastic knife.

When I asked the urbane, apparently fair-minded Barry White, editorial writer for the *Belfast Telegraph,* what the press had found in following up these charges he replied that, to its shame, the press had no tradition of investigative reporting in Northern Ireland. "We know where our own readership is," he said. The *Telegraph* is part of Lord Thompson's chain. Its 150,000 readers are Unionists, not interested in criticism of the RUC; and an exposé of the IRA or the Ulster Defense Association (UDA) would bring a knock at the door or a bomb through the office window. Besides, he said, "everybody knows what's going on."

Terrorism and the oppressive counter-reaction of the state can co-exist and feed on one another in a society that has no mature, shared sense of itself, in a rigid, static society that does not adapt to the changing personal and cultural aspirations of its members, one where ordinary communication between the dominant power group and the isolated minority has broken down. Sean Cooney, a courageous, high-strung, physically exhausted community organizer in the ravaged Catholic neighborhood of the Ardoyne, summed up the frustration of people on both sides working for grass-roots solutions: government and institutional church resources were *not* being made available to the *people;* he was

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sick and tired of being told what to do by politicians and church leaders who *won't listen.*

Meanwhile in Belfast the warring factions are like wild animals circling a hunk of meat, ready to kill for it even though there would be enough for each if each were willing to eat a little less. Although Northern Ireland's hunk of meat—its economic resources—is not enormous, at a time when the overall British economy, with its high prices and relatively low wages, is in poor shape, and although the psychological distance between Catholics, Protestants and British, who all have both exaggerated and well-founded fears of the others' intentions, is still great, a number of constructive compromises are possible.

First, the Catholic Church, while sharpening its specific condemnations of all terrorism and emphasizing its concern for social justice and civil rights, should diminish its role as the dominant cultural force: specifically, it should be much more liberal in interpreting the norms for mixed marriages, to the point of actively encouraging them, and it should gradually phase its young people into a common integrated school system. Even if this did lead to a drop in Catholic religious practice, now estimated at 90 percent with a sag among 18-25 year-olds—and it's not inevitable that it should—the resulting peace and mutual understanding among the young might be worth it.

Second, the Protestant churches should do more to undermine the influence of the 100,000-member Orange Order, and call for a moratorium on their parades—particularly the July 12 march with its drums and bonfires designed to humiliate Catholic neighbors—and break their monopoly on the better jobs.

Third, the United States should get more involved. Besides offering its services to help guarantee an eventual political settlement, it should move now on President Jimmy Carter's promise to encourage more U.S. business investment there rather than wait for the situation to stabilize. More than anything the young need jobs—to break the cycle where in some Catholic neighborhoods almost half the adult men are unemployed and the young men leave school at 16 and "go on the dole," and drift, out of boredom, against their mothers' pleas, into paramilitary organizations where older men put "meaning" into their lives by teaching them to booze, sing songs, shoot guns and plant bombs.

Fourth, international public opinion and private charitable financing should probably pay less attention to the so-called "peace people" who have received a lot of publicity but represent a constituency of only a few thousand and more to the various community action projects concerned with both neighborhood reconciliation and social justice.

But the major question is what kind of formula will bring a long-term political solution. One has recently come from a strange source. On our last night in Belfast, June 29, we met, in an atmosphere of tension and secrecy, with four leaders of the UDA, a Protestant private army claiming 15,000 active members with 8-10,000 reserves, on the top floor of the offices of the Irish Council of Churches. ICC priest William Arlow had, for some time, been promoting secret meetings between government leaders and terrorists on both sides; at one time his influence had helped achieve a brief cease-fire. Now the UDA was presenting a new face: their years of killing, they said, had not brought the results they wanted; they felt they had been used as pawns by the politicians; they have allegedly suspended killing since 1976, while their "study group," with outside professional academic advice, has drawn up a new American-style Constitution, with a bill of rights, for an Independent Northern Ireland—with a Speaker of the House elected by two-thirds (to get consensus government) and an American Chief Justice of their Supreme Court (to assure impartiality). They have been promoting their scheme selectively but vigorously at home and abroad with lukewarm reception. They say Paul O'Dwyer is with them 100 percent and that Senator George McGovern is sympathetic. Obviously public men are reluctant to deal with this plan because of its source.

I must confess feeling a powerful aversion to these men and some doubts about the new appearance of legitimacy they may acquire through the ICC's tolerant ministration. The authoritative *Violence in Ireland: A Report to the Churches* (1977), published by ICC and the Catholic hierarchy, concludes there is "no justification" for the killing and bombing campaigns and reminds church members of their moral responsibility to bring information of violent activities of paramilitary organizations before authorities. These men, and the Provo IRA as well, are no more a legitimate political party or a real army fighting a just war than is the mafia. When their Supreme Commander, Andy Tyrie, a short, compact, thirtyish man with a black moustache, tinted glasses and platform shoes, repeated to me that his group had killed Catholics indiscriminately for years, I asked him why, if they were now seeking a constitutional solution, they did not lay down their weapons. Not a chance; they were quite prepared to return to violence if this new idea didn't work out.

A more reasonable solution that might create the kind of self-confident society in which terrorism would wither, it seems to me, was put forward to us the day of the bomb scare by Denis Haughey, chairman of the predominantly Catholic Social Democratic and Labor Party, in a challenge to the Unionists to face the fact that, according to current population trends, with the virtual halt of emigration, within a generation Northern Ireland will have a Catholic majority. Thus it is to their interest to settle now for a federation (*Commonweal,* May 26, 1978) that will meet Catholic needs and pro-

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tect legitimate Protestant interests. Haughey calls for: an end to British Direct Rule—the Unionists should realize that the British were quite willing to desert them and make deals with Eamon DeValera and the IRA when it served British interests; recognition that "without enormous and unthinkable movements of population, an entirely British Ulster or an entirely Gaelic Ireland are unobtainable"; an offer from the main parties in the National tradition—to include Northern state control over all internal matters, right of British citizenship and passport, a Bill of Rights guaranteeing an open society, a parliamentary system that would protect the rights and access of both communities to power. We will know better this fall what kind of a chance this plan has. If there is a Labor victory in the British elections—which is in doubt because of the economy—this may give Britain the means, perhaps with American encouragement, to finally withdraw and free itself from one more guilty burden of an Empire.

On the boat from Ireland to Scotland I had a long talk with an Ulsterman, a former soldier, a proud Orangeman on his way to march in a parade. He said he had nothing against Catholics, although his three cousins, two aunts and an uncle were shot in the back of the head by the IRA. When he learned I was a priest he shook my hand and said he hoped I didn't mind the things he had said. Also on board were the boys, apparently ranging in ages from 12 to 30, of the Belfast Flute and Drum Band, also en-route, expenses paid, to beat their drums in Scotland in the Orangemen's parades. It was early afternoon, but they had started putting away the pints before they even got on the train, and now they were very drunk and very loud and rather rowdy, stamping on the boat deck and singing "We're the boys from Londonderry . . ." I could sense the violence in these young men and could imagine their part in the bloodshed I had been reading and hearing about for ten years; but when they played their flutes it was music of a sort and I was glad they were having a good time, that they weren't back in Belfast throwing rocks, and that they were getting out of the very small world of Northern Ireland—maybe even to get a new idea—for a few days. I thought of some of their counterparts from the Republic (some generations removed) now in the Irish bars around Fordham in the Bronx where they take up collections for Northern Ireland "relief," and where the young men sing mournful ballads about Irish soldier boys going off to kill a Brit. Would it be too much for a while to ask the Irish to do without some of their songs?

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH

(Rev. Raymond A. Schroth, S.J., is associate editor of Commonweal.)

ANNE HIGGINS

RECIPE

Yeast rises
like praise
clings to the cloth,
leaves its thready face there.

Dough rolls smooth
springs back
seamless in hand
as thought.

The oven opens and closes
its arms.
Smell seeps
from room to room.

Bread, as finished
as a child.
Every slice of the knife
it sings its fearful litany:
I live in the jaws of hunger.
I break as I give
I rise as I die.

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LAITY AND CHURCH: II

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

"The laity must take on the renewal of the temporal order as their own special obligation. . . ." Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity . . . Vatican II

The achievement of an ideal is more often frustrated by the failure to develop what we Americans have so usefully packaged in the indispensable word "know-how," than it is frustrated by bad faith. Understanding the reality of existing structures, method, practique, technique, instrumentality . . . these are all parts of know-how.

In this country today the two denominations reporting the most growth are, first, the Southern Baptists, and, second, the Roman Catholics. One might think that in both laity hope to come to the fullest Christian maturity, to find support in the struggle to live fully Christian lives and, in their work, to begin the renewal of the temporal order.

The fact is that both denominations —so very unlike in structure—are only beginning to find ways of applying the Gospel to the realities of lay life. There is no reason to believe that either Baptists or Catholics are exempt from the conclusions of the Gallup Poll in 1976 about the gap between belief and practice among those Americans who are church members. "Three out of four do not connect religion with their judgments of right and wrong." (It should be noted that there is some statistical evidence that, in the past, graduates of Catholic schools did somewhat better in bridging the gap than did other Christians—but that is another subject.) In general, church leaders do not lead the lay life, and therein lies the difficulty.

This may seem an extraordinary assertion about the Baptists among whom, in theory, power resides in the laity. Nevertheless, it must be significant that the annual Southern convention held this June in Atlanta was almost completely dominated by clergy. Of the record 23,000 registrants only 17 percent were lay persons and, as Marjorie Hyer of the *Washington Post* noted, it is reasonable to assume that some of these were wives of the clergy present. Because each Baptist congregation is autonomous, it is clear that there could be little lay reflection on issues of common concern or national import if the convention was the instrumentality for expressing the fruit of that reflection.

Richard Shaull, professor of ecumenics at Princeton Theological seminary, discussing President Carter as a Baptist leader in the January issue of *Sojourner* says that the centrality of the people in the decision-making process is a myth inherent in Baptist ecclesiology. He cites sociologist Paul Harrison who says that a large, rapidly growing, and loosely structured denomination demands strong leadership to hold it together and that a large church bureaucracy inevitably develops but with no rational or structural ordering of power. The practical results would seem to be that organizational and ecclesial concerns of career Baptist leaders will tend to overshadow all others and that the effort to minimize the gap between the sacred and the secular will be minimal. It is very likely that Mark Gibbs's comment on the main line churches applies as well to the evangelical—"churches have not yet found the best ways in which lay people can be used in their conferences, conventions and synods . . . though lay people are very often asked to take part in the government and organization of their churches, really they are pretty helpless faced with the experienced lobbies and the skills of the clergy and church officers."

Thus, the apparent indifference of the evangelicals to the temporal may not have reflected the mind of the whole church. Both Martin Marty of *The Christian Century* and Robert Rankin reporting for the Danforth Foundation News suggested clerical slowness as the reason for Southern Baptist layman Howard Butt's initiative in proposing the Congress of the Laity (Los Angeles, February, 1978) and funding it was the resources of the Butt Foundation. Rankin thought that underlying the main theme of the congress—creativity—"another of greater importance . . . the attack on compartmentalization." This attack, he felt, ignited the greatest agreement among the participants. Another observer interpreted this thrust as "a major intervention by a foundation into North American social and religious life . . . . . religion is too important to society to be left to official church leaders. . . . Christianity is more than doctrine . . . it is a way of interpreting reality."

That so many of the 800 who attended funded themselves for the four-day conference and stayed closely involved in seminars on evangelism and political leadership, women in the church, international corporate social and ethical responsibility, ecology, a Christian world view, urban needs, race relations, etc., certainly justified Howard Butt's statement, "The Congress did call fresh attention to the capacity of the churches for changing society through awakening the laity." The laity awakened, however, need structures and networks.

Awakening the laity is also the avowed purpose of the bishops of the Catholic Church: the primary objective of the new Bishops' Committee on the Laity, and of the secre-

(*Continued on page 511*)

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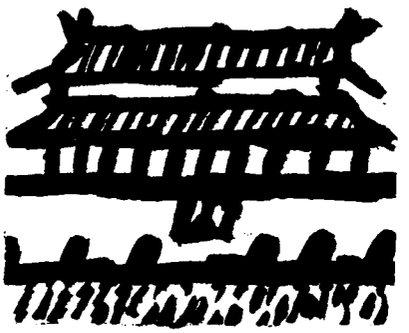
DYING GODS IN CHINA

TIM BROOK



Religion since the Cultural Revolution

One hot, dry summer day in 1975, when I was living as a student in Peking, I climbed the Fragrant Hills to the west of the city. It was the only place where a foreigner could step out of the densely human environment of China into an empty, natural setting. I walked to the northernmost end of the ridge, and from there looked down into the basin below me. Far off in the distance gleamed the white marble of the Temple of the Azure Clouds, cordoned off and unapproachable, visible only from the crest of the Fragrant Hills.

This was about the closest I ever got to Buddhism in the People's Republic of China during by two years' residence there from 1974 to 1976. I went as one of twenty Canadian exchange students to learn Chinese and study the history and culture. Most of us were students of modern China, but I was the exception. I was interested in history, especially the history of religion. Fascinated like so many other students in the early 1970s by the strange aura of oriental religions, I was attracted to Chinese Buddhism by a number of fortuitous accidents, and in the end was drawn all the way to China, a modern nation of which I was initially relatively ignorant.

I was somewhat prepared not to see any practice of religion in China, and to be unable to study religious history. But I was not prepared for a society that seemed to be completely divorced from all religious traditions. Life was bustling and vigorous, everyone seemed to be pulling together, and introspection was noticeably absent in this world where striving always meant action. My newly acquired meditative habits felt entirely out of place, and gradually I abandoned them and fell into step with the Chinese around me. For the first time in my life I was in what appeared to be an entirely secularized society.

My life remained that way for the next two years in China. Though I did see and hear of scattered instances of religious practice, the environment I was living in—the urban university—did everything to strengthen this feeling of secularization. I pursued my own studies on the beginnings of Chinese Buddhism for a while, and had all the reference materials I needed available to me in the history reading room of the Peking University library. Eventually, though, I gave it up, and turned to other questions in Chinese philosophical history. There was simply no support from people who shared my interest.

At one point I tried to get some help. I inquired informally whether I might be able to confer with the noted historian of religion Ren Ji-yu. Ren's book on Buddhist thought up to the Tang dynasty was the only work on religion available in any bookstore. I was told that he was not well, and suffered easily from eye strain. So it came as a real surprise to me last fall when I read an article of his printed in the national newspaper *Guangming Daily*, entitled "Carry on research into religion, criticize theology." This was the first article on religion that I know of in a Chinese newspaper since the Cultural Revolution ten years ago. I suspect that its appearance had more to do with the fall of the Gang of Four than with an improvement in Ren's eyesight.

The drift of the article was at first glance rather weak.

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He criticized the Gang of Four for failing to support research on religious history. That this criticism was justified I can attest to from my own experience. The Gang of Four were removed from power in the fall of 1976, just after I left China. Many of their dogmatic and coercive policies on culture and education have since come under fire; Ren was simply participating in this critical trend. But his main point was unexpected. The Gang of Four's chief error, he maintained, was that they had not carried out a thorough secularization of thought. He was not specific about what he meant, but the article did suggest that there was a lot of mystification going on under the Gang of Four, and that this was rooted in the still lingering religious tradition of China.

Oddly enough, both secularization and religion are claimed to have suffered in the days when the Gang of Four held power. The case for religion's suffering is easier to make. Two weeks after Ren's article, Zhao Pu-chu published a poem which mentioned that the Gang had allowed extremists to damage the Monastery of the Dark Middle Way, in the province west of Peking. Zhao was certainly the man to know. Head of the Chinese Buddhist Association since its founding in 1953, Zhao has been Buddhism's longest-lasting representative in China. He is also a noted poet, and has been able to use this skill to add his voice to the chorus of denunciations against the intimidation and destruction which followed for a time in the wake of the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s.

These recent reports are encouraging to those who feel religion should be dealt with in a balanced and above-board way. But the basic attitude against religion, at least officially, has not changed from what I saw in China two years ago. And I am sure that the attitudes of university students have not changed. Many of my Chinese friends were politely dubious about my own interest in the history of religion. One very close friend asked me cautiously whether I actually believed in religion. He was embarrassed to bring it up, and relieved when I said quite truthfully that I was interested in it as a historical phenomenon.

I asked him what contact he had had with religion, growing up in Shanghai in the 1950s. All he could recall was his grandmother, a devout Buddhist, bowing before an image of Maitreya, the next Buddha to come. He and his friends had teased her about it whenever she went off to the temple. As children of the revolution, they had no reason to understand why people might be religious. In turn, they are generally ignorant about religion. Knowing that I knew something about the subject, one friend once made a point of asking me what a bodhisattva was. He had come across this term for a Buddhist saint while reading a story from the 1920s. He had the general idea, but thought he should just check out his guess by asking me. Fifty years ago it would have been common knowledge.

Much has happened to China in the last fifty years. New social structures and ideologies have been attempted, often with considerable daring. Mao Tse-tung's view back in the 1920s—that religion would collapse as a natural consequence of political and economic struggle—has been the underlying assumption to the present day. A secular and atheistic society has been structured accordingly. What Mao perceived fifty years ago was not exactly the collapse of religion as a personal, spiritual orientation, but the collapse of religious authority in the countryside. Religion had been too tied in with other forms of civil and landlord power to avoid becoming a target of the revolution. Chinese society after liberation in 1949 left very little room for any religious authority. The most telling reform was the land reform, leaving monasteries only enough land for the monks themselves to till. Without income from rents, monasteries could not afford to operate as they had in the past. Most monks and nuns were obliged to return to lay life, now that the economic base for their practice had been removed.

The decline of religion in China has not of course been entirely the natural consequence of reforms to the political and economic structure. Though freedom of religious belief is guaranteed by the constitution, a mixture of encouragement, education and coercion has been used to wean people from religious practices and beliefs. Still, these efforts rested on Mao's conviction—one that he shared with Marx—that religion would die out with the challenge of socialism. The Chinese Buddhist Association and later a Taoist Association were set up to guide the development of religion under socialism, carefully pruning away those aspects which could be considered "superstitious," and following the direction of the Communist Party. Buddhism in particular managed to maintain a limited presence in Chinese society up until the mid-1960s. Then the Cultural Revolution began, changing the face of the Chinese world.

"The Four Olds"

The Cultural Revolution singled out for its targets the "Four Olds": old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits. Religion for many Chinese was a prime amalgam of all these. The former conviction that religion would eventually sink into its own grave under the impact of socialist education and modernization was abandoned, and the calm persistent confidence was pushed aside. For instance, the popular magazine *New Construction* in October 1965 suggested to its readers that religion would "rely on the force of custom to prolong its feeble existence and even plot to make a comeback."

The young Cultural Revolutionaries responded to such calls passionately. Urban youth went out into the countryside to uproot old customs. The people were lectured on superstition, images were confiscated and usually de-

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stroyed, and religious practitioners were subject to public humiliation. Red Guards entered monasteries and temples, castigating the monks and nuns for their backward thinking and driving them out into lay life. For a time, many monasteries had to be put under the protection of the army, to curb the defacing of what other Chinese regarded as an important cultural heritage. Most religious institutions, including the Muslim mosques, were closed.

The extreme anti-religious trend set off by the Cultural Revolution gradually dissipated during the 1970s. The mosques belonging to the Muslim minority, which were important centers of their cultural life, had already opened by 1969. The Christian churches were next to follow suit. South Church, the Catholic Cathedral in Peking resumed celebration of Mass in November 1971. The following Easter, Peking's Protestant church near the Rice Market began to hold services again. But they were opened primarily to serve the foreign diplomatic community. There are never more than half a dozen Chinese present.

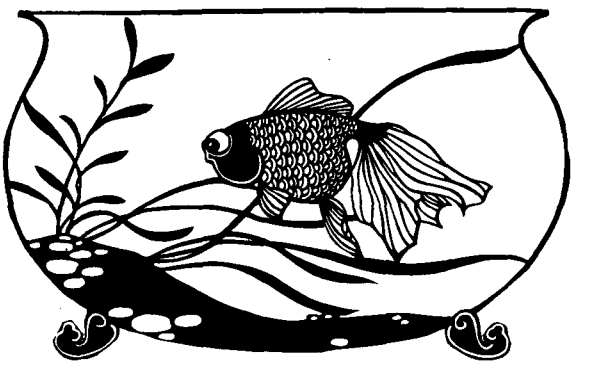
Buddhism took much longer to resurface to public attention. It did so via a news clipping in 1974, when the Chinese Buddhist Association hosted a Buddhist goodwill tour from Japan. This was the Association's first public event since 1966. Perhaps this welcome, reported in brief in the *People's Daily,* was largely a showpiece event, since the Association has not to my knowledge been mentioned in the newspapers since that time. The Association head, Zhao Pu-chu, is getting his poems published, but not under the auspices of the Association.

I did find scattered evidence of traditional religious practice, roughly paralleling this limited revival of religious institutions. The fact that religious freedom has been specifically mentioned in every draft of the constitution from 1954 to 1978 suggests some persistence of religion. I recall asking a cadre from a language institute in Peking soon after I arrived in China whether Buddhism was still being practiced. Without hesitation he said it was. Were there practicing monks in the Peking area, I asked? Yes, there were, and probably in other districts as well. Were the monks mostly elder people? Yes, but a few younger people too, a very few, were still joining religious orders. This cadre's response was gratifyingly open, given what I was later to observe as a great reticence on the part of Chinese officials to acknowledge departures from modern norms.

Aside from events such as the funeral for Sihanouk's mother, however, Buddhism does not wear a public face. There are many temples still standing, but most of them are closed. Some have been converted to other uses, as factories, meeting-halls, or schools. A few have been carefully restored at public expense, and opened to the public as testimonials to the craftsmanship of the Chinese people. Like the tombs of forgotten emperors, they serve to remind Chinese tourists of the past.

For some of these religious sites, the task of restoration has been immense. Many had been wrecked or pilfered long before the Communist Party came to power. A striking example is the Dragon Gate Grotto south of the old capital of Loyang. The vast majority of the hundred thousand stone Buddhas were removed or decapitated by foreign art collectors at the turn of the century. The local people either didn't care or weren't allowed a say in the matter. When foreigners were prevented by law from taking these art treasures, they hired Chinese to sneak in at night and do the illegal removals for them. The busts and statues fetched good prices from museums and collectors around the world. It strikes many Westerners as ironic that only when the Communists took control could this 1400-year-old statuary be protected from such vandalism. A search was initiated to recover what pieces remained in China, and the slow process of repair and restoration is still going on.

At least with Buddhism I can speak from personal experience of what is still on view. Of China's other



major religion, Taoism, I can say practically nothing at all. The most I saw were three of four converted or abandoned temples. The Temple of Dark Mystery in the old commercial center of Suzhou stands in its own small square, boarded up. Cloth is sold in the east wing, and meat and vegetables in the west. Vegetarian Taoists of former days would have been surprised and shocked to find their sacred place now used for the butchering and selling of meat. This decline was due in part to the suppression of secret societies and "heterodox sects"—most of them Taoist in orientation—in the 1950s. Though a Taoist Association was set up in 1957 to draw a fine line between Taoist religion and subversive superstition, since the Cultural Revolution it has faded from view.

In my own experience, Taoism was a closed chapter in China's religious history. Yet recently I have come across evidence quite to the contrary. Holmes Welch, who is an authority on Chinese religion and practice in the twentieth century, passed on to me material collected from a refugee in Hong Kong by Ivan and Miriam London. They were looking for information on lumber production in Fukien province, but the question of religion intruded when they asked about wood consumed

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for making coffins. According to their interviewee, a peasant who left his commune in 1972, funerals were performed in his home village by Taoist priests who otherwise lived inconspicuously and anonymously among the villagers. Even a Party member had sought out a Taoist priest to perform funeral rites for his father. Apparently, public opinion went against economizing or revising funeral observances. If this single story is true, it shows that folk religion may be far stronger than I, or even my Chinese friends, realize.

The one religion which is still visibly alive throughout China is Islam. Islam was brought to China a thousand years ago by Muslim traders and slaves from Inner Asia. Their descendants live on in China today, almost entirely submerged within the Han racial majority. But in a city like Xian in west central China, their numbers are still considerable and their culture very much alive. The Muslims can sometimes be picked out from their Han brothers. Their faces are squarer and more heavily set, sometimes edged with dark beard. Xian is a kind of Muslim home, with everything from Muslim restaurants observing the religious custom of serving mutton instead of pork, to the Great Mosque, the largest Islamic religious center in China proper.

I was with a group of foreign students that visited Xian in the summer of 1975. We asked our local guides whether we could be taken to see the mosque, but one of them said he thought it had been converted into office space. This preposterous suggestion encouraged us to go out and investigate on our own. A guidebook led us into a Muslim neighborhood just a few blocks from the main city square. However, we had no idea of how to penetrate the maze of alleys running between the plain mud-plastered walls. Almost immediately a middle-aged Muslim came up to us and asked if we were looking for the mosque. Would we mind if he took us there? He told us how proud he was to be a Muslim. My guess is that he thought we were Muslims too.

He led us to a modest door in a wall, and we passed into the Great Mosque. An older, bearded man, quite tall, welcomed us cordially and invited us into the main courtyard. We were amazed at what we saw. It was not one courtyard but two set end to end, separated by an ancient gazebo. A pillar standing in the inner courtyard was inscribed with an imperial dedication and dated 742. It had stood there, protected by a canopy from the scorching sun, for 1,233 years. Farther down at the west end of the courtyard was the Great Ceremonial Hall, dilapidated with age, but waiting for the fresh tiles piled in front. It was flanked with two smaller halls. The south side Hall was in the process of careful restoration, done by the mosque members with their own time and money. The north side, however, was literally in working condition.

There, kneeling on prayer mats, were over a hundred men, ranging in age from 12 to 80. They were preparing for the noon ceremony, and waited patiently while the white-capped and white-whiskered elders showed us their place of worship. They were proud to be Muslims, and proud of their mosque. It seemed that they wanted us to see their work and know how strong their culture is. Since 1975, other foreigners have found their way to the mosque, more than the elders are prepared, or perhaps allowed, to see. As of the summer of 1977, a "No Visitors Allowed" sign had been hung up outside the door.

Islam has this strength as the cultural heritage of a minority, which enables it to live on in the People's Republic of China. Every major city has a mosque and an active Imam in charge of it, ministering as much to the cultural as to the religious needs of his community. A few places have schools to teach Arabic to Muslim children, though this was seriously cut back during the Cultural Revolution, and no public move has been made to revive the schools.

Islam, Buddhism, and Taoism all continue in different ways to linger on in modern China, in some cases linking the present with a long tradition in the past. There is still the one religion with a briefer tradition, about which something can be said: Christianity. Something of its fate was revealed last November in a remarkable interview with Rev. Ding Guang-xun, principal of the Nanking Theological College. Rev. Ding had studied abroad in the United States and Canada during the 1940s, returning to China in 1951. He was once the Bishop of Nanking, but relinquished this title in the late 1950s when the Christian churches in China declared themselves independent of clerical authority from the rest of the world. He now heads the only Christian theological college in China. The college sponsors a limited amount of research, but supervises no students.

"I am not a Marxist," declared Rev. Ding unequivocally. He said that Marxism and Christianity have been able to co-exist, and gave himself as an example. "All 26 years, I've worked as a Christian. No Communist has come to say I should relinquish my Christian faith. They say it should be respected. They are frank enough to say that they don't agree with me or that religion is not a good thing. But," he maintained, "we can still work together."

Though they co-exist, Marxism and Christianity lead mutually exclusive lives; there is no suggestion of any amalgamation into a Christian Marxism, though some attempts were made in the 1950s. According to Rev. Ding, "The churches have never accepted Communists as church members. At the same time, the Chinese Communist Party would not accept church members as members of the Party."

Such an environment has not been conducive to religious or social activism on the part of Chinese Christians. Some must maintain their faith privately, living in smaller cities without organized congregations. Even

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where there are congregations, their activities are quite limited. "Christianity here is mainly a worldview and a fellowship of this worldview," said Rev. Ding. "We get together to pray, to read the Bible in adoration and thanksgiving, and to share insights in a most informal and personal way." For some, that fellowship has offered respite from the at times difficult demands of the Chinese political world.

Christianity carries with it the stigma of being foreign. Where foreigners make up the bulk of the congregation, as they do in Peking, the foreignness is respected, and so the old cathedral downtown is still used for Mass. Elsewhere, Chinese Christians do not use the foreign buildings. The few who still practice regularly "prefer to meet in their own homes or in schoolrooms to avoid the stigma of Western-style churches built during mission expansion and linked to foreign imperial penetration." These structures still loom, strangely out of place and time, on the skylines of the east-coast cities like Shanghai and Canton. I have even seen one or two standing forlorn in the fields of the countryside.

It is difficult to believe that Christianity, despite its continued existence, lives on in anything more than a twilight way in China. It offers fellowship; but there are many other organizations which offer it just as well. It offers religious practice, but a practice that cannot effectively engage in social service. Service is highly valued in China, but it is channeled in other ways. For the vast majority of the Chinese people, Christianity is at most a vague memory of missionaries. The only living memory I encountered among my friends came out once when I was walking with one of them past a tree hung with colorful clothes drying in the rare sunlight of Shanghai.

"Ah, a Christmas tree!" he laughed.

"What?" I exclaimed. "How do you know what a Christmas tree looks like?"

"I saw a few here in Shanghai when I was a kid. Some people used to have them in the winter. That must be twenty years ago now."

I have presented China in this article as I discovered it: a nation where a larger and larger sector of the population lives without the overt observance of religion. Buddhism is no longer the force mitigating the violence of the natural world, and in a land of paddy agriculture the floods and droughts of nature can be violent indeed. Taoism is no longer the call of brotherhood against the oppression of the imperial throne. And Christianity has become a limited and private fellowship. Only Islam still flourishes with a public life.

Institutional reform has done away with the social and economic bases on which the traditional religions of China have relied. And the constitutional right to "preach atheism"—a right which is spelled out in the same clause of the Constitution as the right to believe in religion—has had a strong effect on the Chinese people. It is hardly surprising that religion seems no longer a major force in Chinese life.

There is also an internal reason for this eclipse of religion. Religion in China, among the educated classes at least, has not generally had the kind of compelling power which it has had in the West. The problem of atheism and the decline of religion have been less of a crucial issue for the Chinese. The Judeo-Christian tradition in the West bequeaths to all of us preoccupations about belief in a single God, and about the freedom of the individual in a universe created and controlled by this figure. For the Chinese, on the other hand, the universe has never been monotheistic. They have never been forced to confront the personal choice of being free or bound by one God. Agnosticism has been a common trend among the educated for the last two thousand

years, and even atheism has its roots in the Chinese past. Generally religion has not been singled out as one of the inalienable rights of man. Its presence in the Chinese Constitution probably stems more from constitutional traditions learned from the West than it does from internal impulses.

Religion the world over is of course more than just deism. It involves a comprehensive conception of the universe and often an ideal of human society. In this sense the Chinese have been as religious as any other civilization. Scholars and peasants alike shared the vision of the *Dao,* the Way by which celestial harmony could transform a strife-ridden social order into a peaceful unity. Much of Mao's success was because his philosophical writings captured this very ideal, which is rooted in the Chinese tradition. His philosophy encompassed everything from the movement of the universe to the workings of the individual. The contradictions within the human mind or within society worked themselves out for Mao exactly like the contradictions in the universe; by perceiving this the individual could put himself in phase with the entire cosmos. The rest of Mao's successful appeal to the Chinese people was that he provided a program for action.

Mao's vision of socialism in the Chinese context was a real factor in assuring the success of the Chinese Revolution. It continues to be a vision shared by many

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idealistic young Chinese today. In a sense, it has competed successfully against the traditional religions. As the Imam of the Muslim mosque in Hangzhou told Donald MacInnis, director of the China Program of the National Council of Churches, young Chinese "have a new belief system which precludes religion. They believe in socialism and see no need for religion."

This belief in socialism, if we can call it belief, is still relatively new in China. The generation now in its late twenties is the first to have lived entirely within post-revolutionary China. This is the generation that created the huge impact of the Cultural Revolution, when their appeal to Mao's philosophy turned for a time into the cult of Chairman Mao. If Chinese socialism ever became a full functional equivalent of religion, it was at that time. But the cult of Mao has been dead for 8 or 9 years. By 1974, when I arrived in China, it was no longer evident. If any sort of religious Maoism were still alive, it would have been among this generation of my friends; but I detected no special reverence beyond the respect accorded him as a leader. On the contrary, the newsreels showed him as he was, an aged and dying man.

His death in 1976, along with the death of Premier Chou En-lai, had a powerful emotional impact for most Chinese. There were long funeral services, eulogies and mourning processions, lasting for several days. During these days I saw a range of emotional release, including weeping, which I have never seen among Chinese before or since. Was this the last resurgence of a dying cultism? I doubt that. It felt more like the mass bereavement that Americans experienced on the assassination of President Kennedy. It was a sense of loss. "My sadness is not just from the death of one man," said a friend after the service for Chou En-lai, "it touches much more deeply." Perhaps in our terms death brought forth a need for transcendence, a need to which the service gave form and expression. Perhaps in this sense it was religious.

This religiosity may find its place in the People's Republic, though the new chairman Hua Kuo-feng is less likely to inspire the passionate loyalty which Mao commanded. In any case, the religions of gods are more and more finding themselves without any place to fill in modern Chinese society. Many Western religious leaders who have visited China recently have acknowledged this, yet still look toward that society for hope. As Wallace Muhammad, Imam of the World Community of Islam, said, "I'll put it this way: I know religion is not given any boost or send-off in China. But, when it comes to carrying out the divine dictates, I don't think we are in a position to brag any more than the Chinese people."

Where can religion in China go from here? A few temples may be reopened. The head of the Chinese Buddhist Association may continue to publish his poems in *Guangming Daily*. And somewhere beneath the carapace of urban China the young may still give the old a religious burial. But the trend over the last thirty years is decline. The Cultural Revolution seems to have brought the gods of China to death's door, and I see no one who will call them back. That time, it appears, has passed.

THE STAKES AT CELAM III

GARY MacEOIN

Competing ecclesiologies in Latin America

Latin America is currently reenacting the scenario developed at the level of the universal church during the years of preparation for Vatican Council II. The Council of Latin American Bishops (CELAM) will hold its third meeting at Puebla, Mexico, 12-28 October next. Starting more than two years ago, and now building up to a crescendo, supporters of each of two mutually incompatible ecclesiologies are engaged in a struggle for the minds of the bishops, with control of the church in Latin America envisioned as the prize.

The issues are basically the same as those at stake at Vatican II. Should the church continue on its traditional course and in its traditional forms: structurally, a pyramid of power, stressing religious practices, seeing itself as an international institution, the universal instrument of salvation? Or should it continue on the new lines already significantly developed in places (particularly Brazil): horizontal structures developed by grassroots groups with a stress on lay ministries and a concern for ethical practices, especially in the area of politics, and understanding themselves as a community rather than a society, a network of communications, and a sign of universal salvation?

In Latin America, the issue has immediate political implications. To return to the old ways, cosmetically modernized, would be supportive of the status quo

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economically and politically, favoring the objective interests of the oligarchs and the middle sectors dependent on them. To change would benefit economically and politically the 80 percent of Latin Americans living in extreme poverty in the countryside and the mushrooming city slums.

Many thought that CELAM II (Medellín, Colombia, 1968) had resolved the conflict, as many thought in 1965 that Vatican II has resolved the same problem at the level of the universal church. CELAM II made a positive option in favor of the poor, the voiceless, the oppressed. It identified the oppression as institutionalized violence, the neocolonialism of the national oligarchies, and the external neocolonialism of "the international monopolies and the international imperialism of money." Such situations, it concluded, call for "global, daring, urgent and basically renewing change," an unambiguously clear choice for radical transformation.

As with the Council Fathers, however, the concept of basic change was interpreted differently by some on their return home. Others who started serious implementation had second thoughts when they found priests and people wanted to run faster and farther than they judged prudent. Yet others buckled under the pressures of the national oligarchies and their international overlords who recognized that the church envisaged by Medellín was a greater threat than the previous whipping boy, the Communist conspiracy.

In the decade since Medellín, the distortion of the economy of every country but Cuba has escalated. Capital-intensive production techniques mean less work and more hunger in the cities. Expansion of luxury crops (strawberries), nonfood crops (orchids), and beef—all for the U.S. market—has transferred the best land to the transnational corporations, leaving less and poorer land for beans, corn and rice. To keep wages low and maintain this order without justice has forced a massive expansion of structures of oppression: new techniques of control ranging from brainwashing in the controlled mass media through psychological torture to sophisticated weapons and computerized surveillance.

A further factor is that many clergy continue a long-standing emotional attachment to Christian Democracy as a way to modernize and uplift the people while keeping the reins of power firmly in church hands. The theology of liberation that grew out of Medellín has proved a greater threat to the Christian Democrats as a political force than the Communists ever were. Some of its more extreme expressions have convinced innately conservative churchmen that its triumph would destroy the church as an institution.

Finally, many cannot see how, with the personnel and material resources available, the emotional Catholicism of Latin America rooted in traditional practices and transmitted by social relationships, could be successfully transmuted into an intellectually based, personal commitment to Christ. For them, the only viable solution is a neo-Christendom in which the moral and material support of the state will guarantee a society and culture expressing the Catholic instincts they see as deeply rooted in all Latin Americans.

As before and during Vatican II, the two opposing ecclesiologies have never faced each other in rational dialogue. Now as then, the conservatives hold the principal power structures: and now as then, they prefer to use their ability to manipulate rather than rely on the justice of their cause and the reasonableness of their position. Now as then also, the innovators are on the outside, have little financial support, so they must stress the issues. They do have two important factors in their favor. The level of theological ability on their side is much higher than on the other; and the extraordinary network of "grass-roots" communities in most countries of the hemisphere gives them a power base that may prove decisive in their favor, even if CELAM III can be manipulated to declare that the era of change has ended.

Vatican-watcher Peter Hebblethwaite, former editor of *The Month* (London), recently analyzed the power structure. Cardinal Sebastiano Baggio, prefect of the Congregation of Bishops, has been named a co-president (with Cardinal Aloisio Lorscheider of Brazil and Archbishop Corripio Ahumada who was recently promoted from Puebla to Mexico City). Hebblethwaite surmises that Baggio may dominate the troika. His office gives him immense power over all bishops. In addition, he spent 20 years as a Vatican diplomat in 6 Latin American countries. A typical curialist, he puts the interests of the church as he sees them before those of people; and like almost all Italian bishops he strongly supports the Christian Democrats.

In league with Baggio and equally hostile to the theology of liberation is Bishop Alfonso López Trujillo, auxiliary of Bogotá and Secretary-general of CELAM's permanent secretariat. Colombia's bishops are strongly supportive of the country's corrupt oligarchy. They are solidly reactionary in church matters, the only Latin American hierarchy to openly reject the Medellín call to liberation. López Trujillo shares this attitude fully.

The orchestra leader is Belgian Jesuit Roger Vekemans, who fled Chile in 1970 when he failed to prevent the election of Allende, and found a congenial home in Bogotá to continue his vendetta against the theologians of liberation. He has been publicly identified at various times as a conduit for CIA money, and he also has major financial support from Bishop Franz Hengsbach as head of Adveniat, German church aid agency. A group of major Catholic and Protestant German theologians, headed by Karl Rahner, Johann Baptist Metz, Martin Niemoller and Erns Kasemann, in November 1977 protested the "virulent" campaign against the theology of liberation. They charged that López Trujillo, Veke-

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mans and Hengsbach were using German church funds for their partisan purposes, causing "the German church again to fall under the grave suspicion of being on the side of the powerful and of overlooking the inhuman behavior of dictators who call themselves Christian."

One of the more blatant uses of power was the choice of theologians to participate in preparing the materials sent by the CELAM secretariat to the bishops. Ignoring the prominent Latin Americans who had prepared CELAM II and subsequently carried the theology of liberation to all parts of the world, they concentrated on conservative Europeans, such as Paul Dognin, a consultor to the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity, and Georges Cottier, a consultor to the Secretariat for Non-Believers. The Vekemans Center in Bogotá sent to all Latin American bishops complimentary copies of Dognin's *Introduction to Karl Marx* and Cottier's *Hopes in Conflict: Christianity and Marxism.* Dedicated

to the thesis that Christianity and Marxism are totally irreconcilable, these books call all Latin Americans to join the struggle against atheistic Communism. One of them acknowledges a subvention from the De Rancé Foundation (Milwaukee), and the Ecumenical Council of Costa Rica has said that both books were "a generous gift" from the United States.

The 214-page Preliminary Document (PD) the official working paper of the secretariat distributed some months ago to the bishops, was prepared in strict secrecy, without input from any of the major Latin American theologians. Its contents and its omissions alike indicate the hands of the already mentioned European theologians. After a rambling and often self-contradictory overview of religion in Latin America today, throwing in references to all kinds of moods and movements to ensure completeness, it opts firmly for what it variously describes as a new Christian culture, a new Christian civilization, a new society, a new order. While sedulously avoiding the term, it urges a neo-Christendom.

Even more remarkable is the way it proposes to achieve this new Christendom. Latin America, it correctly notes, is moving from a pastoral to an urban-industrial society. All such societies today are based on one of two models: totalitarian collectivism or economic capitalism, both secularitsic and atheist in their philosophical underpinnings. It is for the church to find a third way. This, it urges, requires the Christian religiosity of the people to be safeguarded during the transition so that the new society will be defined by its Christian religion.

The scenario in part spelled out, in part assumed, presents the evolution as continuing along its present lines. Instead of following Medellín in its challenge to internal and external neo-colonialism, it looks to "a new civilization of love animated by the church" to achieve a unity of goals and motivations among all Latin Americans, the exploiters and the exploited, that will resolve the social, economic and political problems.

Not only in Latin America but in all parts of the world anguished cries of protest are growing in number and stridency. The basic criticism is that this purely idealist approach runs counter to all historical experience. More concretely, it is easy to define what will happen if the fox and the chickens have equality of opportunity in the chicken coop. What is presented as "a third way" is in reality a defense of the status quo repudiated by Medellín, this in spite of the fact that the gap between rich and poor in Latin America has grown significantly since Medellín, and the objective misery of the poor has intensified in almost all countries.

In addition, if by a miracle the approach worked, all it would mean for the poor and powerless would be a change of masters, paternalistic masters perhaps but still masters. Liberation is not a gift from others. The slave must liberate himself.

Those who would want CELAM III to start from and go beyond Medellín are opting for one of three overlapping approaches. Many of them are making detailed critiques of the PD to alert the bishops to its underlying ideology. Outstanding critiques include Pablo Richard (of the Lebret Center, Paris) in *Foi et Développement;* CRIE (Regional Center of Ecumenical Information) in *Christus* (Mexico City); a team of Peruvian theologians in Latinamerica Press (Lima); Fernando Danel Janet of Mexico, J.B. Libânio of Brazil, and others in an upcoming Vol. 28, No. 1 issue of *Cross Currents.*

Others led by Juan Luis Segundo of Uruguay are concentrating on having the PD simply rejected, as Vatican II dealt with the curial schemata presented to it. In two weeks, they say, a document of this extent and internal confusion could not possibly be reformulated. Instead, they would offer a few brief statements supportive of and supplementary to Medellín.

Clodovis Boff of Brazil approves of all efforts to get from the meeting something better than the PD, but he introduces another consideration. The conditioning of many of the bishops encourages them to opt for the "easy" solution offered by the document. But even if they do, it is not too important. Secularization is an

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irreversible historic fact. The dream of a neo-Christendom is naive. The church has already lost its monopoly of influence not only in the ideological but even in the religious sphere. What is now important is the steadily growing "diaspora" church, the church of the grassroots communities. So no matter what the bishops may decide at Puebla, the march of events will not be significantly affected.

Thanks to all the conflicting advance input, it is likely that the bishops will come to Puebla with a broad range of attitudes. It may well be that they will find it impossible to reach a consensus on anything like the PD. In that case, one can safely prophesy that there will be several of the pro-Medellín theologians within reach with alternative documents that will reflect less than they want but will at least save Medellín and hopefully take some steps beyond it.

ONLY CONNECT

THE STAGE

The traditional revue, that thing of songs and sketches, has pretty much passed away to be replaced by either the musical retrospective of a single artist's work (*Side by Side by Sondheim, Ain't Misbehavin'*) or the thematically conceived show in which music may (*The Club*) or may not (*For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow Is Enuf*) be of central importance. The most recent of the theme shows is *Working,* which Stephen Schwartz put together from material in the Studs Terkel collection of interviews that carries the same title.

Coming home from *Working,* I found myself singing "Joe Worker" from *The Cradle Will Rock*—or trying to, since Marc Blitzstein's music, as difficult as it is indelible, is not made for nonvoices like mine. The attempt was a spontaneous reaction to the blandness of the new show. Since *Working* has more composers than a TV special, it can hardly have a single musical voice as *Cradle* does and since this is 1978 not 1938, it can hardly have the same kind of political message. Still, a number of distinctive musical voices working together and a less amorphous ideational line were expected. Although individual numbers were effective (Craig Carnelia's "Just a Housewife," sung by Susan Bigelow), I carried away a sense of sameness which stays with me even when I stop and say, oh yes, that was a recognizable Micki Grant song, that one sounded like Mary Rodgers. None of them manages the exasperation, the joy, the outrage the occasion calls for. Take "Millwork," for instance; the song and the dance are comment as decoration; the strength, the pain in the number come from the worker's own words and the simulation of the deadening repetition those words describe. The show is at its best when it borrows directly from Terkel's book (the fireman's speech, for instance), at its weakest when it does what it set out to do, use the working situations as song cues. As the individual voices that Terkel recorded merge into the musical chorus of *Working,* a book "about violence —to the spirit as well as to the body," becomes a musical aimed at transforming the audience in the soft-minded way one would expect from the creator of *Godspell* and *Pippin.* Schwartz wants his audience to "take a look" at the men and women who check their cars and hats, he told the *New York Times* (May 14), and "start to realize what the connections are." That's nice and the show's nice and the material cries out for something tougher, meaner, bigger.

At first glance, Elizabeth Swados's *Runaways* may seem to have those qualities. It certainly has a demanding drive, a beating insistence as though it were trying—musically, physically—to force itself into the playgoer's brain, heart, consciousness. *Runaways* also has—as *Working* does not—the stamp of a strong organizing personality, not only in the music but in the show as a whole, which is a little odd considering that it is the product of months of interviews, improvisation, workshop sessions—that Swados had to find the line on which to hang the disparate dreams and nightmares fed to her by her informants and her performers, who are sometimes the same young people. In a program note, she calls the show "a collage about the profound effects of our deteriorating families." As such, it is an opportunity to give flesh and immediacy to a frightening phenomenon which in the pages of so many newspapers and magazines has begun to take on the look of an abstract PROBLEM. In intention and in intensity, *Runaways* should have worked on me in a way that it never did. For one thing, the show was infected—very specifically in one of the songs—with the idea that the world is peopled with runaways. If this is a truth, it is a meaningless one, like Jack Gelber's addiction metaphor in *The Connection.* If being a runaway describes the human condition, then Swados's lost adolescents are variants whose special situation cannot elicit the sympathy and concern that her initial interest in such children would seem to demand. More disturbing than this ideational push toward abstraction is to the insistent sense of a show in performance. I was aware that I was being manipulated, often sentimentally (as in the scenes with the doll), and, although I admired a number of the performers very much (Ray Contreras, Jossie de Guzman), I too often found myself facing a stage full of energetic young people who began to seem more like show-biz kids *in situ* than runaways *in extremis.*

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On the assumption that I am some kind of new conservative old radical, I wandered into a preview of the *Pins and Needles* revival at the Roundabout to see if I could find in it what was missing for me in *Working* and *Runaways*. It is now being called "Harold Rome's ILGWU Musical Review," which it was not in the 1930s; that makes it an example of the retrospective revue I mentioned in my opening paragraph. Not only are the sketches, which Rome did not write, missing from the production, but "F.D.R. Jones" has been pulled in from *Sing Out the News,* an appropriate period Rome song but not *Pins and Needles*. Although some of the satiric points still have force, it is essentially a nostalgia show for those who remember the first production or, like me, know the songs from the 25th anniversary recording that Columbia Records issued in 1962. The production is a flaccid one, the staging vacillating between awkward and cute, but occasionally, when a performer is allowed on stage alone (Daniel Fortus, singing "When I Grow Up"), the wit of the songs comes through. What I found, even in this insufficient *Pins and Needles,* was a sense of self-mockery, and when one remembers that the ILGWU members performed the show originally, joking about their union even as they embraced it ("It's Better with a Union Man"), some sense of what is missing from *Runaways* and *Working* becomes apparent. I do not suggest that unrewarding work and the disintegrating family be treated as fun problems, but both shows do have comic numbers which are somehow leaden, earnest, solemn. Joy in *Working* is likely to turn into comic *shtik,* in *Runaways* into compulsive punching. Now about those connections. . . .

GERALD WEALES

BRODY AND THE BEAST

THE SCREEN

In *Jaws II,* Bruce the Shark eats a helicopter. It's the best thing in the film. I loved it. But getting his choppers on a chopper is only his *pièce de résistance*. He also eats two scuba divers, one water skier, a can of gasoline (*flambé*), a whole smorgasbord of pleasure boats, and the Transatlantic Cable, which he fatally mistakes for some dental floss. We get to watch him down all this script material, too, which means we are seeing a lot more of him this time than we did in the original *Jaws,* where he remained a mere dorsal fin until the end. For the new film the original Bruce, who was found living like a vagrant in the park on Universal's back lot, has received a $2,000,000 refurbishing. Side views have been added to the frontal attack he made on us in the first *Jaws*. (Being as big a star as Norma Shearer was, Bruce also has one photogenic and one unphotogenic side, and his contract specifies, as hers did, that he can't be photographed from certain angles.) The sea-horse power in Bruce's underwater track has been increased as well, so now he can be goosed up to 40 m.p.h. when he's swimming flat out. Finally, he has been outfitted with two new sets of teeth—one hard plastic set for eating boats, water skis, helicopters and the like, the other soft plastic for eating actors.

If we see a good deal more of Bruce than we did last time, we also see more of his old nemesis, Amity Police Chief Brody (Roy Scheider). In the original *Jaws* Brody seemed to be out of it most of the time. As an ex-New York cop who was now the whole department on a little island, Brody was certainly out of his element. Once he started sounding off about the shark problem, he was also on the outs with the local Chamber of Commerce. And even when he finally got to go shark hunting, he still seemed the odd man out on a boat with a marine zoologist (Richard Dreyfuss) and a professional fisherman (Robert Shaw) who both specialized in sharks. I think we were all surprised when Brody ended up being the one who was actually capable of killing the shark. The only thing he and the shark had in common was that we hadn't seen very much of either of them—they were mystery figures. In *Jaws II,* however, director Jeannot Szwarc seems to realize that, next to Bruce himself, the most incredible natural phenomenon the film has to deal with is Roy Scheider's face. At the same time that we are getting many more glimpses of Bruce in action, we are also getting many long, lingering close-ups of Scheider as he looks out to sea, wondering what the hell Bruce will pull next. It's hard to say which is the more severe sight—Bruce on the attack, or Roy in repose.

Since the fisherman died in the first *Jaws* and the zoologist is off making another picture, it's only natural that Brody should move to center-stage. Nevertheless, he at first appears to be the same incompetent outsider he was in the original film. In fact, *Jaws II* at first appears to *be* the original film all over again. Just as we and the zoologist had a terrible fright when a half-eaten body bobbed up in a boat wreck in *Jaws*, so in *Jaws II* do we and Brody have a similar experience. Just as Brody flips out and has a fight with the mayor right in front of all the tourists on the beach in *Jaws*, so does he again in *Jaws II*. His bungling and brashness alienate Amity's powers-that-be even more this time than last. When he clambers down screaming from his shark look-out, clears the beach by rushing across it with his revolver drawn, and then empties the revolver into what someone finally tells him is a school of bluefish in the surf, the town council fires him.

But it soon becomes apparent that with the people

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who really matter in this film—the local teenagers—Brody fits right in. While it may have been obvious by the time Brody went out with that zoologist and fisherman in *Jaws* that he didn't know a tenth as much as they did, by the time he goes out in *Jaws II* to rescue the teenagers, whose regatta is under siege by Bruce, it is just as clear that Brody knows precisely what these kids know. For what is the only kind of knowledge that a teenager on summer vacation acquires? Carnal knowledge. The kids are constantly ogling each other through their skimpy summer clothes, Frenching behind the dunes, getting laid in the bottom of drifting boats, etc. And from the opening scene, where Brody pulls his wife away from a dinner dance so they can "fool around," the film is at pains to make it clear that whatever problems he may have with sharks or oceans, in bed at least, he's not incompetent. When Brody goes out to rescue those kids, even though he can't read the charts or figure out how to use the radio, we just know he's going to succeed anyway. He shares with the kids something more profound than the abilities that the fisherman and the zoologist shared. He has instinct, libido. He's among the very young at heart.

It also becomes apparent in this film why Brody is the right man for the job of hunting Bruce. Now that we get to know Bruce a bit better, we see that he isn't a creature of nature at all. He's more of a gangster, just the sort of amoral thug that it takes a streetwise ex-cop from New York to deal with. Actually, we had a hint of Bruce's gangland connections in the first film, where the last shot of him showed him chewing on a diver's air tank as if it were a cigar and he were Edward G. Robinson in *Little Caesar*. In *Jaws II* he reminds us more of Scarface, on account of having eaten that burning gas can, but Brody is still wise to him. Brody suggests early in the film that a new shark may be in Amity's waters looking for him because he killed the first one there. The locals and the shark experts laugh at this idea, but subsequent events seem to imply that sharks are indeed an international brotherhood, like the Mafia, and do operate under the code of the *vendetta* as Brody guessed.

Even at the height of his incompetence, when he's taking pot shots at bluefish, we can see that deep down where it counts, he really knows what he's doing. He is using bullets which we saw him tip with cyanide. He is clearly a man who knows how to fight gangsters on their own terms. This time we are hardly surprised at all when Brody gets his shark. Like all good gangster movies, *Jaws II* ends with the tough cop sending the hood to the electric chair.

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ELLEN STRENSKI

The essays of Edward Hoagland

In one of John Gardner's fairy tales, a spell cast by a wicked witch could be broken only by "someone with a proper sense of values—for instance, someone who knew that, whatever one might think at first glance, people are better than sea gulls." Edward Hoagland could claim the prize with his essays. For him, people *are* good. But sea gulls and other animals are important, too.

Pets and wild creatures can help us learn much about ourselves and others—communication theory, ecological responsibility, tenderness and wonder. Everyone from Grizzly Adams and other "wildlife managers" to dog walkers, we're all interested in animals now, not just for hides and tallow, but as kin: Washoe, Baretta's cockatoo, nameless wolves and whales, even R2-D2. R2-D2 was the best possible pet—affectionate, intelligent and indestructibly made out of metal. Rover. He wagged his invisible tail and whimpered at being left behind, behaving like all these other creatures who claim our attention but cannot talk, at least to us.

Spokesmen and interpreters spring up. R2-D2 had C-3PO. Whales have Greenpeace, dolphins have John Lilly, Pupfish had (there probably aren't any left now) bumperstickers. Even Lord Kenneth Clark has turned from *Civilization* to *Animals and Men*. A great tradition starting with Orpheus. But George Crumb's "Vox Balaenae" aside, today's translators of great apes or wood storks are more likely to use a pen than a lyre, and the best of these literary naturalists is Edward Hoagland. He's good, for political and aesthetic reasons. And now that John Gardner's *On Moral Fiction* has encouraged us to speak up, we can add moral reasons, too. Hoagland's personal essays dramatize a hard-won and tough-minded optimism, as rare these

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days as the snail darter or the Santa Cruz salamander.

Titles of Hoagland's essay collections, *The Courage of Turtles, Walking the Dead Diamond River*, and *Red Wolves and Black Bears*, indicate his loyalties. He is, by choice, a foreign correspondent in the Wild Kingdom, writing back to *The Village Voice, Esquire, Harper's, The New Yorker* and other magazines where his pieces first appeared. Reports from the field have been conflicting (Descartes, Beatrix Potter). Indeed, with our growing ecological consciousness, it is turning out not to be a Kingdom at all, but a very complicated sort of Commune. Hoagland is good, first, because his egalitarian sympathies are ideologically pure, unlike others with aristocratic pretensions. Loren Eiseley's *Immense Journey* to the throne, for instance, may be benevolent, but it's out of date. Extinct species, human overpopulation and pollution show that a monarchy doesn't work very well. Hoagland presents a cooperative alternative, which is especially attractive because you don't have to move to Eagle, Alaska, to experience it. Walking his collie by the Lower East Side or hiking a grouse trail in New Hampshire can work equally well for Hoagland, and for us through his writing, to re-establish a sense of belonging to, rather than brutalizing the rest of nature.

But Hoagland is no simpleton mooning over the picturesque. Until recently when he began to be commissioned to write specifically about wild places and animals, Hoagland wasn't out in the bush preparing a travelogue, but escaping. Worse yet. Having escaped to the woods as an urban refugee, this misfit is tormented by loneliness. Not only that, but he feels he's a villain, contaminating the wild by his very presence and contributing to its death. Hoagland, who sets out in one essay to describe the New England Wilderness, had to admit finally that there is none left. "The city is dying irreversibly. . . . And my mountain is dying, too." But

> As far as that goes, one cannot live intelligently without realizing that we and our friends and loved ones are all dying. But one's ideals, no; no matter what currently unfashionable ideals a person may harbor in secret, from self-sacrifice and wanting to fall in love to wanting to fight in a war, there will continue to be opportunities to carry them out.

Hoagland's own ideals are strengthened and illuminated by his experience of nature, even as he escapes to it, an honorable justification in the *flower-in-the-crannied-wall* tradition.

> I'm on the brink of embarking upon still another trip to some bleak national swamp or public forest, and I think, Good God, who needs it? But excitement, the hope of visions and some further understanding—that old, old boondoggle perpetrated by the wilderness—draws me on.

The understanding Hoagland achieves, along with an "exuberant release" from his sense of guilty failure, is the "commonality of animals and men," a perception of the interlocking set of relationships which define our place in the world. "Where is home?" he asks constantly, trying to fit us all in, and generating these essays about the blighted world that, dispossessed and guilty, we nonetheless share with others (furry, fishy and human others). In spite of everything, he believes, this kinship is important, and we can even dare to be hopeful about it.

No dilettante, Hoagland takes the writer's responsibility very seriously, which he claims is "to swim upstream . . . unearth ideas that have been laid aside, reaffirm the unfashionable." All Hoagland's essays, in one way or another, share with us this not very fashionable thought: "There is a simple, underlying basis to life which we forget almost daily: that life is good. . . . Any careful study of living things, whether wolves, bear or man, reminds one of the same direct truth." He values this conviction, fights for it, and has a deliberate method that goes far beyond show- and-tell ambitions for breaking through our habitual pious or bored responses and getting it across to us.

This rhetorical strategy is based on his own grateful appreciation of other public performers, especially the carnival and circus people he came to know and love, traveling one summer with Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, where he bedded down in the giraffe's straw, or taking care of retired MGM lions in California, getting fired from that job for crawling into her cage with a lady mountain lion. It has become fashionable these days to appropriate this tinsel world and its fascinating freaks as a literary symbol of the fraudulent: Life is a Funhouse. Not so for Hoagland, just one of many things his writing makes us see and appreciate differently. His essays enthusiastically celebrate public performers of all kinds—animal trainers, strippers, cowboys, wrestlers, trapeze artists—and by extension explain his own nature writing. About the circus, Hoagland explains, "Put as simply as possible, what these people are trying to do is entertain, astonish and, yes, enlighten us with their trim tumbles, with the tricks, innocence, pathos, forlornness and perfection of their bodies." So, too, Hoagland's essays. He's a literary stunt man, performing for us, taking deliberate risks, startling our imaginations with technical sleight of hand, and sharing with us his own *"jubilation* of discovery." Hoagland is an impresario, and he puts on quite a show, featuring his rural Vermont farmhouse and the bears and other neighbors who live there, or Manhattan's melting pot, as he travels and the seasons change.

Like any good artist, Hoagland makes it look easy, and we wonder where he gets such authority. After all, generous intentions alone don't guarantee an audience. His subjects? Peter Matthiessen attracted many readers with *Blue Meridian, The Search for the Great White Shark.* But when Hoagland tracked down an endangered species it was the scruffy Texas red wolf, or a mountain lion that may or may not have even been there. Hardly

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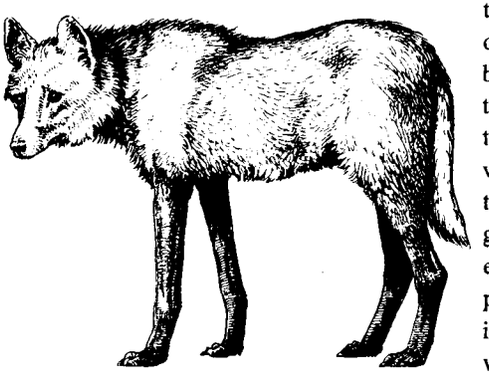
sensational. Anyway, turtles and dogs give him as much pleasure. James Herriot's veterinary skills, let alone Eiseley's scientific reputation, command our respect. Hoagland? A novelist. But that's it. Hoagland works in words not on the high wire. His verbal hat-tricks are ingenious appeals to the imagination. That and dramatic use of very private experience for public illumination. Hoagland even has a rhetorical theory—the ambush, adapted from Robert Rogers's Twenty-First Rule of Ranger Warfare which he quotes, "If the enemy pursue your rear, take a circle till you come to your own tracks, and there form an ambush to receive them and give them the first fire."

One disarming tactic is immediately unsettling. This guilty monster, as he sometimes sees himself, openly reports his stutter, asthma, murderous impulses, tormented kinky fantasies. No tough guy in the Hemingway tradition, he's vulnerable, like us, and he hurts. Hoagland's self-scrutiny risks our good opinion, but the resulting intimacy we have been maneuvered into is worth it. We recognize and begin to trust him up close. The language doesn't get in the way, solemn or pretty or sentimental—common temptations in this genre. Just think of Eiseley's "Judgment of the Birds" which takes place in a "glade lit like some vast cathedral." Since this piece is so widely reproduced, most of us will remember how the small songbirds "took heart and sang from many throats joyously together as birds are known to sing. They sang because life is sweet and sunlight beautiful. They sang under the brooding shadow of the raven." Etc. At the very least Hoagland has a sense of humor and self-mockery. Jokes, too. Wordsworth walked 186,000 miles in his lifetime, Hoagland tells us deadpan, adding a few thousand to DeQuincey's original measurements. Wordsworth and the speed of light. A hat-trick. "Turtles are a kind of bird with the governor turned low." It happens so fast, tossed off effortlessly. A circus clown is performing, apparently in trouble on a high wire, and "the band plays music representing the wry look we wear while watching a stranger's funeral procession pass." Another essay begins "Wolves have marvelous legs." The cliché of glib approval? No. This claim literally invites us to join him, to watch and truly marvel with him as out of his hat he pulls these wolves in their astonishing uniqueness:

> Wolves have marvelous legs. The first thing one notices about them is how high they are set on their skinny legs, and the instant, blurred gait these can switch into, bicycling away, carrying them as much as forty miles in a day. With brindled coats in smoky shades, brushy tails, light-filled eyes, in-



> tense sharp faces which are more focused than an intelligent dog's but also less various, they are electric on first sighting, bending that bushy head around to look back as they run. In captivity when they are quarreling in a cage, the snarls sound gutteral and their jaws chop, but scientists watching pet wolves in the woods speak of their flowing joy, of such delight in running that they melt into the woods like sunlight, like running water.

This poetic, evocative reporting about wolves is clear and vivid, but more than description is happening here. Our intuitive sympathies are being manipulated and reconstructed; our range of feeling, stretched and freshened. The last sentence particularly rearranges associations stored in our memories. "Scientists watching pet wolves in the woods," instead of scientists dismembering animals at the Yerkes Primate Research Center. "Speak of joy," rather than write jargon about recombining DNA in Cambridge laboratories. As the rest of Hoagland's essay goes on to tell, scientists watch wild wolves in the woods from helicopters, and there aren't any "pet" wolves there to watch anyway. But the passage works. It makes us feel and hope and think differently about wolves and the people who study or care for them.

And reading Hoagland on anything, tugboats or turtles, makes us feel differently about possibilities for ourselves—for all of us: bears, kids, train conductors, the AMC. He opens up experience. To see Hoagland as just a nature essayist is a good beginning, but there's more to his writing than loving observations on wilderness controlled by special rhetorical uses of self-scrutiny and metaphor. There's joy, and there are autobiographical musings which often sharpen to perceptive cultural analysis. "Writers can be categorized by many criteria," Hoagland explains, "one of which is whether they prefer subject matter that they rejoice in or subject matter they deplore and wish to savage with ironies . . . I'm of the first type." And his essays range over much of human experience. In fact, bookstores shelve his essay collections variously under "Nature" as well as "Autobiography," "Essays," "Sociology," and, oddly, "Fiction."

"To live is to see," writes Hoagland, "and traveling sometimes speeds up the process." Traveling has recently taken him to Africa, and forced some uncomfortable adjustments:

> I . . . had come to look at the animals. Having written about North American wildlife, I had wanted to find out if there was something to say about these floral giraffes and priapic rhinos, the airborne extravaganzas of kites, storks, and vultures. . . . Apart from retailing a few late discoveries about animal behavior, however, there seemed to be nothing fresh to convey. To write about animals anywhere nowadays is to write of the end of the

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world, yet I don't necessarily believe in the end of the world.

Hurrah for Hoagland! "If human nature eventually is going to take the place of nature everywhere, those of us who have been naturalists will have to transpose the faith in nature which is inherent in the profession to a faith in man—if necessary, man alone in the world. It is not an impossible leap." And Hoagland, for all his self-doubt, does profess a most welcome faith: "I believe in glee and in the exuberance I feel with friends and animals and in the fields, and in other emotions besides that." Hoagland's generous affirmation is sometimes obvious and ecstatic, at other times patient and implied in his curiosity about all life, his delight in its variety, and his insistence that "life is precious . . . precious and wretched perhaps, but the operative word is *precious*." Hoagland performs for us, an illusionist. Defying modesty, like gravity, he exploits his deformities, snatches our attention, conjures up all these animals and places and people, and his show astonishes us into delight. It's the best one in town.

BOOKS

RED SAILS AND LIBERAL SEAS

FRANCIS J. FLAHERTY

Concerned About The Planet: The Reporter Magazine and American Liberalism, 1949-1968

MARTIN K. DOUDNA

Greenwood Press, $14.95 [197 *pp.*]

Crisis On The Left: Cold War Politics and American Liberals, 1947-1954

MARY SPERLING McAULIFFE

U. of Massachusetts, $12.50 [204 *pp.*]

The Romance of American Communism

VIVIAN GORNICK

Basic Books, $10 [278 *pp.*]

Demagoguery is a constant danger. This is the sobering lesson both of Mary McAuliffe's book on the liberal acquiescence to McCarthyism, and of Vivian Gornick's wrenching, impressionistic series of interviews with a hundred former members of the American Communist Party. McAuliffe's liberals, running full-tilt from the Red Scare, trampled on, or neglected to defend, those basic civil liberties they had formerly cherished and championed. Gornick's Communists, mesmerized by a utopian vision, sacrificed their moral and intellectual independence to the Marxist "Line." Both books dismally suggest that neither good intentions, nor personal integrity, nor a democratic tradition, is proof against the dictatorship of a man or an idea. It's enough to make one a Hobbesian: civil liberties hang by slender threads in a world full of sharp knives.

The liberal response to Senator Joseph McCarthy certainly was a sordid affair. Unlike Lillian Hellman, many fifties liberals *did* cut their consciences to fit the fascist fashions of those years. The CIO, the ACLU, and the ADA all forsook their liberal beliefs in varying degrees. In 1947, CIO President Philip Murray vowed, "Every man possesses the right to practice any damned political philosophy he believes in." Murray forgot this vow in 1953, when he dismissed eleven locals from the CIO for their alleged Communist ties. Even the American Civil Liberties Union adapted to the times. The Union refused to help Julius and Ethel Rosenberg because they were Communists and, for the same reason, it ousted Elizabeth Gurley Flynn—an ACLU founder—from its board of directors. Liberals in Congress were conspicuously silent about the cavalier attitude toward due process in the House Un-American Activities Committee. And the Americans for Democratic Action, the country's preeminent liberal organization, could muster only lukewarm and unsustained opposition to the depredations of Senator McCarthy.

In rather wooden and belabored academese, McAuliffe records these and other well-known sins of omission and commission by American liberals. Unfortunately, her detached and rational style does not convey the texture of this irrational era. Liberal "me-too" anti-Communism is well-documented. Reading McAuliffe's book, I kept saying to myself, "Yes, yes, yes, but what was it *like*?" The liberals of the fifties, nurtured on the reformism and relative security of the thirties, must have been completely disoriented by the radical rightward shift of the American political spectrum. Russia, governed by a mass murderer, was brandishing nuclear weapons; McCarthy was flirting with fascism; the postwar *Pax Americana* dissolved soon after it was conceived. The liberals' options shrank in an atmosphere of national hysteria and international tension. McAuliffe's dry and factual account supplies merely information, while the McCarthy Era, about which the facts are well-known, calls loudly for interpretation and empathy.

Vivian Gornick is all yin to McAuliffe's yang. Her lucid interviews of ex-Communists focus on the human experience of the American Communist Party. Gornick talked to sailors, intellectuals, actresses, Bronx Jews, Boston Irish, and Scarsdale WASPs. They all agreed on only two things:

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the experience in the CP/USA was the centerpiece of each of their lives and, during the years of their memberships, they were consumed by the Marxist vision.

Like all passions, their Communism was, at first, euphoric. It enlarged their lives, and galvanized them with a sense of historical purpose. One former Communist, now seventy-years-old and living in a small Cape Cod village, recalled his discovery of Marxism while working in a Chicago slaughterhouse in 1928: "We were on fire with politics. We talked Marxism day and night. . . . It was air, bread, light, and warmth to us. For me, it was so exciting it was almost physical pain. . . . You know, that's the one thing almost all Communists share, the memory of what it was first like to read Marx, like fireworks exploding in your head, and the love you felt for the human intelligence."

At the same time it bestowed these gifts on its members, the CP/USA rigidly proscribed their thinking, hobbled them with rigid dogma, and permitted their non-political emotions to atrophy. The light that illuminated their lives eventually blinded them to its own internal contradictions. They became Party automatons, insensible to the primary irony that they were dehumanized soldiers in the war against the dehumanizing strictures of capitalism.

Disillusionment set in at different times. 30,000 members left the Party in 1956, when Khrushchev revealed Stalin's atrocities. Others left when Russia invaded Hungary the same year. Some remained until the 1968 Czechoslovakian invasion. But, in every case, there was a shattering of hopes and illusions. One member, recalling a Party meeting immediately after Khrushchev's Stalin speech, captured this inarticulate despair: "Like dogs, we wanted to talk, but all we could do was bark."

Gornick's story is an unsettling one, more unsettling than the verification of McCarthy's fantasies of Reds under beds would ever have been. Gornick is recounting the sad human fact that people can become the slaves of ideas. Marxism invested the lives of these men and women with great historical meaning; having found that meaning, they held it tenaciously, ignoring all facts and thoughts which contradicted the "Line." If McAuliffe's liberals lacked the moral courage to resist the demagoguery of a man, Gornick's Communists lacked the intellectual courage to resist the demagoguery of an idea.

> *The real shortcoming of the liberal magazines, some of* The Reporter*'s staff felt, was their "doctrinaire" quality. Theodore H. White, who had joined the* New Republic*'s staff during the (Henry) Wallace period, later said of his time there: "Six months on a liberal magazine will cure almost any illusion. The dogmas were more constricting and binding than those at* Time."
>
> —Concerned about the Planet

Human nature fares much better in Martin Doudna's delightful history of a man and a magazine. Max Ascoli, an ebullient Italian émigré given to such malapropisms as "I want you to go through this with a fine-tooth brush," founded *The Reporter* in 1949. For twenty years, his magazine competed very successfully with the *Nation* and the *New Republic* for the ear of the American liberal community. Doudna uses *The Reporter*, and the philosophy of European liberalism with which Ascoli invested it, as a lens through which to examine the assumptions and inconsistencies of postwar American liberalism.

Ascoli was a liberal in the etymological sense of the word. He believed in human freedom, and he ardently believed that fascism and communism gravely threatened that freedom. During the fifties, when American liberals were anti-McCarthy and anti-Communist, Ascoli and *The Reporter* were indistinguishable from the mainstream. But, as McCarthy and the Cold War subsided, Ascoli became "liberally conspicuous." As American liberals grew softer toward Communism, Ascoli hardened in his opposition. He opposed the rise of Castro in Cuba; he denounced Khrushchev; he supported the Vietnam war until 1968. Communism still subordinated the individual to the state and, as an etymological liberal, Ascoli saw no reason to change his views. One week after Lyndon Johnson, faced with growing discontent over Vietnam, announced his intention not to run for a second full term, Ascoli saw that *The Reporter* had run its natural course, and he closed down the shop. *Time* attributed the magazine's demise to its ideological consistency in a changing world.

Doudna examines this and other divergences between *The Reporter* and American liberalism, with some interesting conclusions about the latter. But, absent the political theses, the book is a fine biography of an influential postwar figure, and a history of a journal which, at its zenith, was arguably the most important liberal publication in America.

Infallibility: The Crossroads of Doctrine

PETER CHIRICO, S.S.

Sheed Andrews and McMeel, $20
[372 pp.]

AVERY DULLES

In recent years there has been a flood of historical and controversial writing on infallibility, both pro and con, but we have lacked a serious and doctrinal development. This lacuna is admirably filled by the present work, outstanding for its depth, thoroughness, and consistency. Highly abstract in style, it makes considerable demands on the reader's attention and analytic powers—but this is a price well worth paying for a work that promises to make a significant theological advance.

Chirico's epistemology and metaphysics are heavily influenced by Bernard Lonergan, from whom he borrows key terms and concepts such as "differentiation of consciousness," "higher viewpoints," and "transcultur-

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al meanings." To indicate the approach and style one may quote Chirico's own definition of infallibility: "The recurring generic process by which the church, because of the universal nature of the witnessed saving reality which dogmatic statements express, can come to a certitude in the understanding of that reality that is equal to the certitude that a person has of his or her own existence" (p. 333, cf. p. xii).

Even after attentively reading the whole work, the reviewer unpacks this definition at considerable risk. As I understand it, the Chirico theory may be summarized somewhat as follows. The risen Jesus is universally present to creation and is recognized as such by the church. By influencing the consciousness of Christians the risen Lord enables them to discern new meanings in the patrimony of faith. These meanings come to expression in various ways corresponding to the culturally conditioned languages and thought-forms of different epochs and regions. After many such tentative formulations, certain universal meanings can be perceived as pervasive and as constitutive of the church's unity in all times and places. These dogmatic meanings, reflecting the differentiations of human consciousness brought about by the risen Christ, express universal salvific truth and are therefore normative for all Christians. Such meanings can be brought to formulation by any member of the church who achieves the requisite conditions, but the official formulation for all Christians remains the task of the pope and the bishops. Although the universal episcopate, and the pope as its representative head, are endowed with a special charism for achieving such formulations, the charism does not operate in an automatic, mechanical way. The mere claim that a pope or council is uttering a universal Christian meaning does not establish that that claim is warranted. To ascertain that a given formulation expresses a dogmatic meaning requires a process of discernment by the whole church. Thus the notion of reception, prominent in Orthodox theology, has a legitimate and important place in the doctrine of infallibility. While the dogmatic formulation does not draw its infallibility from its acceptance by the church, it cannot be recognized as infallible without such acceptance.

This summary by no means does justice to the depth and complexity of Chirico's exposition, but it may perhaps serve to suggest the general shape of his argument. The net effect is a reinterpretation of papal and conciliar infallibility not unlike that proposed by other contemporary Catholic theologians, including Karl Rahner. In Chirico's treatment I especially welcome the emphasis on the intrinsic power of revealed truth to manifest and validate itself to the faithful, both individually and collectively. This emphasis on the intrinsic aspects of infallibility permits Chirico to avoid excessive preoccupation with the juridical criteria so prominent in many commentaries on Vatican I's definition. Chirico reinterprets

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by Michael J. Malbin

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the conditions of an infallible papal statement in ontic, rather than juridical, categories.

Like any new theory, Chirico's will have to be subjected to severe theological scrutiny. I personally believe that his basic theory can withstand that test, though I have reservations about several emphases in his presentation.

First, Chirico repeatedly asserts that tradition is superior to Scripture since the interpreter is in a better position to judge the meaning of the text than the author. To this he adds: "It should be clear that the living magisterium is necessarily of greater importance than Scripture and the subsequent documents of the tradition" (p. 219). Chirico is perhaps here reacting excessively against the current trend among Catholics to accept the older Protestant view that Scripture alone is the final norm of Christian doctrine. While he is obviously aware that the actual operation of the magisterium falls far short of the ideal, his idealized presentation could seem remote from the experience of many Christians today.

Second, I am puzzled by Chirico's tendency to identify certainty and permanence with universality, as though the particular and the concrete were necessarily tentative and dubious. There are cases, I would contend, in which we can be certain about particular facts known to us personally or through convergent testimony (as Newman demonstrates so brilliantly in his *Grammar of Assent*). In any case, the measure of certainty is not proportional to abstractness or even to universal significance. Still, I accept Chirico's position that any Christian dogma must have, at least potentially, a universal saving significance.

Third, Chirico believes that the present time demands and favors the articulation of universal meanings, infallibly grasped. This deveolpment, he argues, is made possible and necessary by the new consciousness that universal meanings have not previously been disentangled from the culturally limited understandings and expressions in which they have been imbedded. Unless the church is to be torn apart by the pluralism of cultures, Chirico maintains, Christians must find ways in which to express the unity of their faith. For him this means that the magisterium must increasingly move from a prophetic manner of speaking, which addresses particular situations, to a strictly dogmatic and universal mode of speech.

Chirico is of course aware that other authors, such as Rahner and Lindbeck, have drawn the opposite conclusion from the same premises. They would say that since the church has become conscious of the culturally limited character of all formulations, the leadership should generally be content to address specific situations, speaking in a prophetic rather than dogmatic style. Personally I welcome Chirico's insistence that dogmatic formulations, even though culturally conditioned, can be the bearers of truly universal meanings, but I would add a note of caution which he too might not reject. Because of the inevitable tensions between the divine meaning and the human understanding and between the human understanding and the verbal formulation, the multiplication of dogmas often serves to divide rather than to unite the Christian community and to burden inordinately the task of Christian mission. Generally speaking, the church is more effectively united by shared symbolism and lived communion than by dogmatic definitions.

While raising these questions, I wish to emphasize my thorough agreement with the main argument of this book and my appreciation of the contribution it makes to questions still under discussion. Anyone who wants to speak knowledgeably about infallibility in contemporary Catholic theology must read and carefully ponder this important volume.

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Cambodia: Year Zero

FRANCOIS PONCHAUD

Nancy Amphoux, Trans.

Holt, Rinehart, $8.95 [256 *pp.*]

DAVID P. CHANDLER

In Phnom Penh, early on the morning of April 17, 1975, Father Ponchaud witnessed an extraordinary sight:

> Small groups of young Khmers, scarcely fifteen years of age at the most, dressed completely in black, wearing Chinese-style peaked caps and "Ho Chi Minh" rubber sandals, festooned with Chinese . . . grenades and anti-tank charges . . . entered the city, silently, from all sides.

The population, thinking the war was over, was overjoyed, but the newcomers

> seemed on the edge of exhaustion, lost, complete strangers to the gaiety of the population. Indeed, they were the only ones not to rejoice.

The final phase of the war, the liberation of Cambodia from its past, had begun. Father Ponchaud, who lived in Cambodia from 1965 until a month or so after liberation, has written a conscientious, grief-stricken account of life in Cambodia in 1975-1976. To do so, he interviewed hundreds of refugees (his Cambodian is fluent), monitored the broadcasts of Radio Phnom Penh, and used statements of Cambodian officials traveling abroad as well as evidence from foreigners who have visited the country.

The sources are insufficient for a balanced picture, but they are all that anyone outside the country can use. Democratic Kampuchea keeps all but

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its officials from traveling abroad; it operates no postal service, publishes only an official newspaper whose contents overlap the radio broadcasts, and allows very few people into the country. Cambodian officials, traveling abroad, speak of the successes of the revolution, but unbelievers are not allowed to see them. If everyone is "seethingly happy," as the radio often asserts, why are they also silent?

The new regime does not share Father Ponchaud's fondness for the Cambodian people. Like President Nixon, who called Americans "the children of the family," the revolutionary organization (*angkar*) is contemptuous of the way Cambodia used to be governed, and the way Cambodians used to think. Only two events in the past—the construction of Angkor (c.800-1200 AD) and the defeat of the Americans are singled out for praise. The language has been ironed out to remove hierarchical overtones; children have been set against their parents; and life has become a war, in Father Ponchaud's words, "against nature, against one's enemies, and against oneself."

Father Ponchaud is a little too generous to Sihanouk, but he has no use for the corrupt and comatose Lon Nol regime, or for U.S. "policy" toward Cambodia in 1970-1975. He admits that in April, 1975 he wished the revolutionaries well. At the same time, he recoils from phrases like "the dormant energy of the Cambodian peasant masses," from the idea that happiness can be rationed and imposed, from the killings that followed the war, especially near Battambang, and from the intellectualism of Cambodia's social engineers.

In American Power and the New Mandarins, Noam Chomsky argued persuasively that American social "scientists," on the fringes of the Vietnamese war, used Vietnam as a testing-ground for egregious theories of counter-insurgency and "nation-building." The leaders of Democratic Kampuchea, acording to Father Ponchaud, are doing the same thing now in the name of social justice, putting theories into action without estimating the cost. By overlooking the people, he argues, they have lost the revolution.

After reading *Cambodia: Year Zero,* I share Father Ponchaud's pessimism about the future, especially in the

REVIEWERS

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short run. I should point out, however, that part of this pessimism flows from what may be a misreading, on his part, of conditions in pre-revolutionary Cambodia. If the peasants were content, where do the *cadres* come from? Like many French writers, too, he idealizes the colonial regime, which he sees as partnership rather than domination; he dismisses Cambodian nationalists of the 1930s as "Cochinchinese." But to say there are roots for the revolution in Cambodia's past is not to excuse the mercilessness with which the revolution has been carried out. Partly because Father Ponchaud has been scrupulous with his sources, and struggles so hard to be fair, *Cambodia: Year Zero* will be difficult to surpass, although a chill hangs over it, like the silence that hangs over Cambodia today. If indeed the country is in the process of being reborn, the price extracted from its people—by Lon Nol, the Americans, and the revolutionary organization—has been murderously high.

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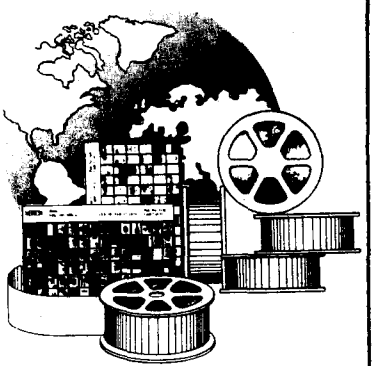

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IN BRIEF

PROVIDENCE AND EVIL, *by Peter Geach, Cambridge Univ.*, $9.50, [153 pp.]

This book deals with one of the perennial, most intractable problems in theology: given the world as we know it, how can God be both good and all-powerful? Tho book, which is by no means an ignoble effort, leaves the question (as we might expect) perennial and intractable.

Professor Geach, who lectures at the University of Pennsylvania, and teaches logic at Leeds, begins (as does St. Thomas) with some crucial distinctions between being almighty and "being able to do everything." But where he disagrees with Thomas (I, Q. 25, Art. 3), I would say he falls short of him. (We seem to have made very little progress with this question since the thirteenth century; or is it since the book of *Job*!) It was Thomas who pointed out that it is more precise to say that God can do all that is *possible*. He cannot create a "square circle," which would be a non-thing, a contradiction. Geach rejects this explanation, insisting, for example, that while God cannot lie, there is no logical impossibility in His doing so. He spends no time explaining or defending his example; and the reader must ask why, if God is Truth, there is not an immediate logical impossibility in His lying.

But if on this point Geach seems simply in error, his logical constructions in other parts of the book were, admittedly, too complicated for me to follow. Either he was writing for other professors of logic, or he failed to give a sufficient number of concrete examples to elucidate his argument for the lay reader.

This too must be said: he equates Christian orthodoxy with the most literal understanding of the dogma of Original Sin. Original Sin, as far as I am concerned, is one of the most intelligible (even "demonstrable"!) religious doctrines in this, the century of Hitler, Stalin, Hiroshima, etc., etc. But that our understanding of this doctrine is confined to the "perverse will of Adam," as propagated in "his undying germ-plasm," I would, as a man of my time, deny most emphatically.

Geach is not stupid; he is certainly not "illogical"; nor is he a timid man. Given his fundamentalism and a clear mind, you get the kind of book this is. And that, as I said before, is a not ignoble effort which leaves an intractable question intractable.

MICHAEL ZEIK

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 483)

ingly, Chernus says ". . . so constricted was Chopin by his effeminacy and neurasthenia that he dared not act upon any sexual or patriotic impulses, but rather sublimated them in his music." On the one hand we are asked to believe Chopin was homosexual, and on the other hand we are told he had no sex life. Regarding who is a homosexual, psychologists are fairly much in accord in holding that since we have so little information about what constitutes homosexuality, we can only call someone a homosexual who practices homosexuality. And surely Chernus ought to know that not every effeminate man is gay, any more than every football player is straight.

He mentions Chopin's love for a woman, but concludes that it was "superficial and inconsequential" because Chopin also expressed his love for a male friend. In neither case is there any evidence of sexual activity, yet Chernus, like the judges at the Salem witch trials, knows how to follow a hunch.

Under the guise of supporting evidence, Chernus states that "Chopin lived and worked *most happily* (italics mine) in a milieu dominated by almost overt homosexuals. . . ." I wonder if Chopin knew what an "almost overt homosexual" was? Never mind, to have been happy in their company was wrong of him and shows clearly that he must have been one

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of them. Or could it be that he enjoyed and respected their creative talent and didn't care which way they swung? There are tolerant people like that, even though Chernus may not be one of them.

His most preposterous claim, however, is that homosexuality leaves its mark on music, something "virtually ignored by musical scholars," (no doubt because they are scholars and not idiots). There is no way one can prove this thesis, and he doesn't try. Music is too abstract an art to reveal anything specific about a composer's personal life. You could never tell from their music that Mussorgsky was an alcoholic, that Debussy had mistresses, that Mozart wrote some buoyant symphonies while suffering physically.

The quickest refutation would be to have Chernus listen to several unfamiliar compositions and then tell us the sexual preference of each composer. If he passes that test, he's ready to tell us which triangles were drawn with a limp wrist.

(REV.) STANLEY R. RUDCKI
Chairman of Fine Arts
Niles College, Loyola University

Reply

It is indeed appalling for Rev. Rudcki, a supposedly professional academic, to resort to puerile epithets like "dumb" and "idiot" in discussing such a large, complex subject as homosexuality in artists. And his equation of my review of Bernard Gavoty's *Chopin* with "Salem witch trials" is surely more indicative of his own state of mind (delusions of persecution?) than of the matter at hand, for even openly gay historians and literary critics like Martin Duberman, Robert K. Martin, and Eric Bentley, among others, have been re-investigating well-known and unknown homosexual cases.

Rudcki's attempt to disprove Chopin's homosexuality conveniently ignores the two extraordinarily candid passages from his letters to Tytus Woyciechowski I quoted, and I still await his interpretation of them. They are incontrovertible evidence of Chopin's inclination towards Tytus rather than Konstancja Gladkowska; what else can explain his failure to even approach her for months while both were students at the Warsaw Conservatory? Apparently, Chopin's infatuation for her went only so far as to inspire a few compositions.

Later, Chopin's interest in Maria Wodzinska was discouraged by her family on account of his illness. In her journal, George Sand remarked the psychosomatic nature of Chopin's neurasthenia with statements like "Who knows where his spiritual ills end and his physical ills begin?" and also noted that any lovemaking with Chopin was out of the question, as it would probably kill him. Lesbian and other heterosexual affairs were Sand's recourse, and Chopin turned to Delacroix. But Gladkowska, Wodsinska, and Sand did provide Chopin with a heterosexual front as well as images of idealized femininity to which he addressed his best music. Chopin's and Sand's break in 1847 ended his creative life altogether and, not surprisingly, his health deteriorated quickly. Thus, unlike Mozart, for example, Chopin's creativity was greatly dependent on his life circumstances. But isn't this life-art connection the essence of what we mean by romanticism?

In the face of all this, Rudcki naively demands "evidence of sexual activity"—as if the letters and journals were not proof enough! What can he mean by this? *Physical* evidence? Photographs? Do we have (or need) such evidence to determine the inclinations of Proust, Gide, Gertrude Stein, Diaghilev, Cocteau, Tchaikovsky, Wilde, Pater, Symonds, Whitman, Genet, Burroughs, etc.? Or perhaps Rudcki would also like to contest the homosexuality of these and other artists. Actually, Gavoty was on the right track when he compared the personalities of Chopin and Proust and how both lived apart from reality in their own mythic pasts. And to suggest, as Rudcki does, that perhaps Chopin didn't even know what a homosexual was, overt or not, makes him out to be even more infantile and out-of-touch with reality than I have already indicated he was.

When so many classical musicians evince homosexuality, one cannot but conclude that a musical tradition of dandyism exists parallel to those traditions in literature (especially poetry), drama, and visual arts. Charles Ives, arguably America's greatest composer, was singular in his rage against the effeminacy of European and European-derived classical music—see his *Memos* and *Essays Before a Sonata*. Thus, it is most likely that Ives went into insurance not for money, but to avoid the homosexual politics of the classical music world which still control what music is performed, recorded, published, funded, academic appointments, etc. (Prof. Benjamin DeMott admits as much in the essay "But He's a Homosexual. . . ." in *Supergrow*.) The incredible neglect of Ives's music until recently stems largely from this fact, and one has only to read composer Ned Rorem's candid diaries, John Gruen's *The Party's Over Now*, or the interviews in various gay magazines to appreciate the situation Ives was rebelling against.

And surely Rudcki can discern some difference between the preening narcissism of, say, Chopin's, Tchaikovsky's, and Rorem's music and the galvanic physical confrontation of indigenous American music like Ives, blues, jazz, and rock music.

ROY CHERNUS

AN APPEAL

"Girlstown of Pusan"

Father Aloysius Schwartz and his hundred Mariahive Sisters care for some 1900 abandoned children in Seoul alone. Now he seeks to build "a decent home" for the 300 orphan girls now housed in 15 dangerously dilapidated cottages in Pusan. Funds are urgently needed. Gifts for this vital project should be sent to: KOREAN RELIEF, INC., P.O. Box 2151, Washington, D.C., 20013.

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Nixon: Two Views

Arlington, Va.

To the Editors: I admire the inclusion in your May 26 issue of two such divergent opinions on the publication of Nixon's memoirs. Thomas Powers's thoughtful balancing of Nixon's accomplishments against his crimes in "The Mauling of Nixon" makes Frank Getlein's comments seem shallow-minded and savage by comparison.

Granted that Nixon is a "crook"; but he has been sufficiently punished by being forced into a shameful (if perhaps wealthy) retirement. As Powers points out, even murderers have rarely had such scorn heaped upon them.

Getlein's vindictiveness is reminiscent of the search and destroy tactics for which Nixon was notorious. It seems to point to the truth of the theory that we hate in others what we have been unable to root out of ourselves.

MICHAEL WHITENER

Merton on the Lam

Unionville, Va.

To the Editors: In December 1968, I was a delegate to the monastic conference in Bangkok where Thomas Merton died. So I read "Merton on the Move," James T. Baker's account of his search for Thomas Merton—and as a part of it, his search for the place where he spent the last three days of his life—with great interest [Apr. 28]. It is a lively and colorful piece. I am sorry to have to tell you, however, that the author should have researched the information he gathered about the cottage where the tragedy took place and some of the details. It is very largely based on misinformation. Perhaps quite naturally an author tends to accept at face value what he hears in a distant land about events that happened there in the recent past—in this case it was nine years ago, only. The Thai nurse who took him around the Sawang Kaniwat or Red Cross, where the conference was held, had for all he knew been there at the time. But a brief look into *A New Charter for Monasticism,* Notre Dame University Press's publication with the proceedings of the conference, would have set everything straight.

Evidently the Sawang Kaniwat is now, as the author states, a "home for the aged," but in 1968 it was something like a small hotel with a number of buildings scattered about, one of which was the commodious hall used for conferences. Since no nurses were present in 1968 in what is now a "hospital," the author's guide evidently spoke from hearsay. However that may be, it is clear that another legend is in the making here (there were many equally fanciful ones at the time the first news reports of Merton's death were flashed to the West), and I think it should be nipped in the bud. For instance, the author, after being taken to a small building, which he was correctly told was Merton's, was informed: "He had wanted to be alone so he had taken the upstairs." In fact, in the four-room cottage, his room was on the ground floor, to the right. Opposite his was a room occupied by a Philippine prior, and upstairs above that one was the third, occupied by a French-speaking monk. The room above Thomas Merton's, to which the author had been led by his guide, was actually mine.

A cleaning lady who recalled the afternoon when Merton's death took place evidently embroidered the legend further. She showed the author just how the wire of the fan had become frayed (because it had had to be connected by an extension that ran under the door to an outlet outside the room), and he concluded that many of the details earlier reported about the bathroom and the floor of Merton's room were incorrect—which they surely would have been if Merton had lived on the second floor. I should also state that in 1968 both my fan and Merton's were connected to outlets inside the rooms. Actually, the author never examined what had been his room at all. Because of Thai beliefs about the likelihood of return of spirits of the dead, the room to the right on the first floor, where Thomas Merton died, was immediately denuded of all its furnishings, the wall separating it from the entrance hall was removed, and it was turned into a sort of sitting room—as I found it when I myself returned there in 1970.

Unfortunately that is not all. Someone else has contributed to the legend—again someone whom an author would have no reason to distrust and who, indeed, probably thought he was telling the truth as accurately as the nurse and the cleaning lady did. The author recounts how, in trying to locate the place where Merton died, he had met a priest at the Church of the Holy Redeemer. He had been called, the priest had told him, on December, 1968 to "help whisk Merton's body out of Thailand before the Thai police could tie it up for weeks with red tape." (Memory can play all sorts of tricks, so let me simply say that, as will be seen in a moment, it could only have been on December 11, the day after his death.) The priest happily told him, he states, of "the mad race with the Thai Keystone Kops to an American Army morgue." I have no precise knowledge of what happened on December 11. But I know that from the time Thomas Merton was discovered lying on the terrazzo floor of his first-floor room, shortly before 4 P.M., those in authority at the conference had no alternative but to let him lie there till the Thai police arrived to check, about 6 P.M. Meanwhile, a Thai physician examined the body and reported that death had come as a result of "acute cardiac failure and electric shock." Moreover, for some hours during the night following, monks by turns kept vigil by the bed on which he was finally laid. It is quite possible that there was a "mad race" to the Army morgue early the next day. I never heard about it. If the Thai police had really wanted to "tie [the body] up for weeks in red tape," one would guess they would have acted with more Keystone-Kop-like dispatch than they did.

We generally look to the press for our facts. Indeed, we have no other

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recourse. In the present instance I am forcibly reminded of that classic line from "Hee-Haw": " 'Fact' is stranger than truth!"

JOHN MOFFITT
Poetry Editor, *America* magazine

Reply

Thank you for this chance to respond to John Moffitt's letter correcting some of my "facts" about Thomas Merton's death. When battling with someone of John's skills, it is always an advantage to have two swings to his one. Sorry to say I cannot comment on the Hee-Haw wisdom he quotes. As a poor but proud white southerner, I view Hee-Haw in about the same light a proud black person might view Amos 'n' Andy reruns.

But I am relieved to know that he found me in error on just one of my hundred or so details, though that error is a large one and miscolors several other details and interpretations, though too he suspects my tendency to exaggerate on other details. (Keystone Kops for Thai police and "whisk" for "expedite" are of course exaggerations.) I readily and gratefully accept his corrections since he was "on the spot" when Merton died and since—as we have been told—"western" memories are superior to my guide's more imaginative, myth-making "eastern" ones. My only regret is that he did not understand that I was describing only my own experience searching for Merton, not giving an authoritative historical account of the death; but then "western" minds have trouble making such distinctions.

I seem to have been in historical error only in identifying Merton's last bedroom as an upper rather than a lower one. "Upper room" is of course more mythically apt, and by John's account the real death room (due to Thai superstitution) no longer exists as a room. Perhaps the confusion of rooms lay not so much in the maid's attempt to mislead me as in her attempt to dramatize, to recreate the scene of death in a room more like the death room than the real one now is. Her explanation of the fan's frayed wire, caused by the door's friction, as was the case with *my* fan's wire, is harder to explain. Perhaps she had just forgotten. Perhaps she was rationalizing a "western" scientific explanation for my sake. Perhaps her "eastern" mind was making a new myth.

What her error means is that the Merton myth is still growing—in Asia as well as in the West. I don't mind helping it along (my fan was quite real—though mythical too) so long as I do not misrepresent any hard facts. For protecting me from myself, from the "eastern" mind I was beginning to develop, I am in John Moffitt's debt. Pilgrims to Bangkok's "Red Cross place" should definitely stop downstairs.

This exchange has been extremely beneficial because now my original thesis stands out in bolder relief: Merton has escaped, is still escaping, and will continue to escape us all, especially us westerners who might think we have him. He seems determined to keep sliding down back bedroom drainpipes forever.

JAMES BAKER

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Abigail McCarthy (con't)

tariat it has created, being "to assist all the bishops 'to recognize and promote the dignity as well as the responsibility of the laity in the Church.' " (*Lumen Gentium*) As with the Baptists the difficulty lies in the structures of leadership. Surely the dignity of the laity rests on the special obligation for the renewal of the temporal order, but serious lay reflection on that order is still missing from the dialogue just beginning. Said Archbishop Jadot, Apostolic Delegate, to those present at the first consultation sponsored by the committee—that with some leaders of lay organizations (April, 1978)—"Dialogue leads to exchange; exchange to co-responsibility." But he also quoted Cardinal Hume who said that it would take fifty years to work out the proposals of Vatican II.

Just after Vatican II, Dr. Cynthia Wedel pointed out that in the document on the laity she "missed a serious discussion of the dilemmas of the modern Christian in his daily work . . . I wondered, as I read this, how many lay people actually engaged in secular occupations shared in the drafting of the document." That serious discussion and input was still missing from the consultation more than a decade later, although the first general communication to lay leaders had suggested as one possible subject for dialogue, "means of developing awareness of the laity's responsibility in the temporal order."

A committee, a secretariat, brief and selective consultations are frail instruments for the heavy burden of communicating the needs and concerns of 99.7 percent of the church. The difficulty is complicated by the fact that, juridically, the church is governed by dioceses; in theory the normal avenue of recourse for the laity is through diocesan structures. In reality, like the Baptists, however, the bishops have depended on a large church bureaucracy which has been the natural outgrowth of the World War I founding of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and the more recent organization of the National Council of Catholic Bishops. Just as are the Protestant bureaucracies, this one is staffed by church professionals and theirs has been the lay voice actually *heard*. It was to this bureaucracy that Catholic layman, Secretary Joseph Califano, turned for assistance in planning the ill-fated White House Conference on Families and it was one of its own, Francis Butler, that he hoped to make co-director before the conference foundered on controversy. Quite naturally so—since initiatives in the temporal order have increasingly come from this source in the church—witness the *"Call to Action."* This is neither good nor bad, but a fact to be considered, when embarking on a dialogue with the laity living in the world, "called there by God" (again *Lumen Gentium*).

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